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ATLANTIC DISCOVERY

A FOURTEEN NIGHT CRUISE ON BLACK WATCH | 4 MAY 2018

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with The Sacconi Quartet; Tim Horton, piano; and Gary Ryan, guitar



From Liverpool we will round the coast of Scotland and enjoy some of the most dramatic scenery in the world along the Norwegian coast, before we cross the Arctic Circle. We then call at Leknes on the Lofoten Islands; Tromso, the "Gateway to the Arctic"; and Honningsvag on the North Cape, but the real adventure begins at the glorious but remote Svalbard Islands. We will stop at two evocative ports: Longyearbyen, and the abandoned Russian mining town of Pyramiden, and take in magnificent views before returning south, via the Faroe Islands.

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Welcome



For a composer who never stepped outside Germany, Bach's music incorporates a surprising variety of European styles, from the French tierce en taille to the Italian concerto grosso. Part of Bach's richness can be explained by his study of the music in his personal library, which housed volumes

by De Grigny, Raison, Frescobaldi and Pachelbel, among many others. But also scores by Dietrich Buxtehude.

On p38, Horatio Clare retraces Bach's 250-mile pilgrimage from Arnstadt to Lübeck in order to hear Buxtehude. The tale is a familiar one, although it's not widely known that Bach spent three months in the north German city. So what might he have learnt from the Dutch master? Buxtehude was a fine all-rounder – a composer of exquisite cantatas, sonatas, oratorios and an impressive body of organ music, but his works had myriad styles running through them, from the rich counterpoint of his early 17th-century north German predecessors to the improvisatory style of the Italian Frescobaldi and Buxtehude's compatriot, Sweelinck. He was also one of Europe's finest improvisers.

Three months with Buxtehude, and JS would have left with the confidence to ignore fashions and carve his own superlative path. As Radio 3 prepares to spend a festive week in the company of Bach (p30), I too would like to wish you a Bachian, and very happy, Christmas!

Oliver Condy Editor

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS



Horatio Clare Author and broadcaster 'Having pursued JS Bach across the German countryside, I now sense him nearby, sometimes in the way I think of Coleridge and

Shelley: immortals who were once 20 years old, and very much like you and me.' Page 38



Toby Young Composer 'The sense of joy and community

that Christmas always brings has this year inspired me to write The Owl, a brand new carol for

the readers of BBC Music Magazine. I'd love to hear what you think of it.' Page 48



Oz Clarke TV wine expert and writer 'It is surely one of those eternal truths that good wine tastes better when listening to good music and your favourite music

makes you even happier when drinking your favourite wine. Just do it!.' Page 52

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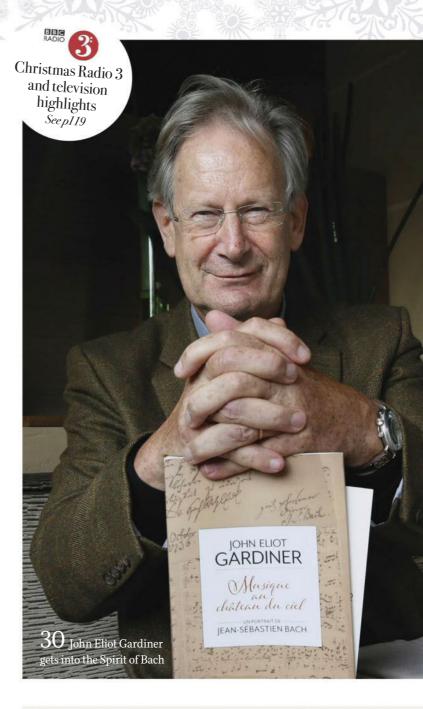
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EDITORIAL

Plus our favourite Christmas carol Editor Oliver Condy

Bethlehem Down (Warlock)

Deputy editor Jeremy Pound

A spotless rose (Howells) **Reviews editor** Rebecca Franks

Coventry Carol

Production editor Neil McKim *Hark! The herald angels sing*

 $\begin{array}{c} \textbf{Cover CD editor} \, \text{Alice Pearson} \\ \textit{No\"{e}l nouvelet} \end{array}$

Editorial assistant Freya Parr O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Listings editor Paul Riley O Jesulein süss (JS Bach)

Art editor Dav Ludford Once in royal David's city

Designer Liam McAuley In the bleak midwinter (Darke)

Picture editor Sarah Kennett *The holly and the ivy*

Thanks to Daniel Jaffé, Claire Jackson

MARKETING

Subscriptions director Jacky Perales-Morris Direct marketing executive

Craig Ramsey
ADVERTISING

Group advertisement manager Laura Jones +44 (0)117 314 8760





Louise Edwards +44 (0)117 314 8384 Sales and partnership manager Rebecca O'Connell +44 (0)117 933 8007 Senior account manager Rebecca Yirrell +44 (0)117 314 8364 Senior brand sales executive Katie Gibbons +44 (0)117 933 8072 Brand sales executive Mike Bailey +44(0)1173148841Classified sales executive Stephanie Hall +44 (0)117 300 8535 Inserts Laurence Robertson +353 876 902208 SYNDICATION & LICENSING Tim Hudson +44 (0)20 7150 5170 Richard Bentley +44 (0)20 7150 5168 PRODUCTION Production director Sarah Powell

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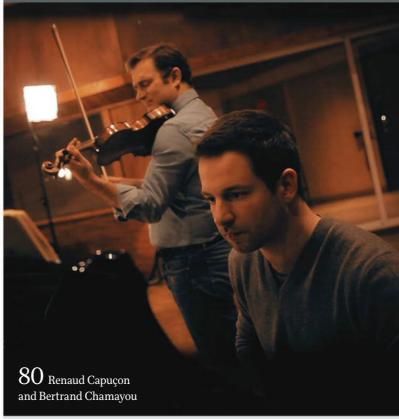
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Christmas reviews

Your guide to the best new recordings, DVDs and books



80 Recording of the Month



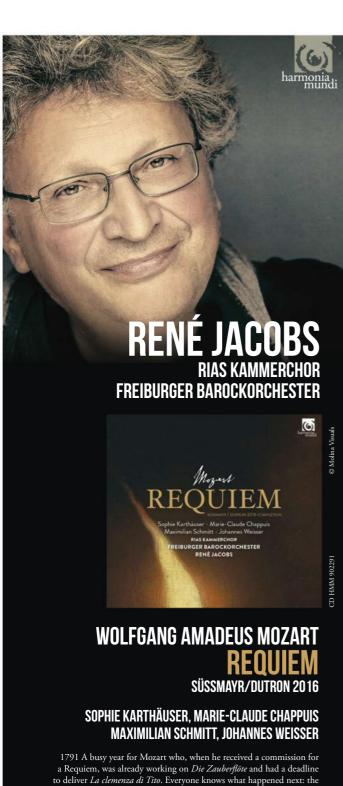
DebussySonatas and Trio

'Ahead of 2018, a group of France's finest musicians prove that sometimes anniversaries can be jolly good things'

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to deliver La clemenza di Tito. Everyone knows what happened next: the commission postponed, exhaustion and death, a work left unfinished and which, after several composers were approached, was finally completed by Süssmayr. This version gradually became established as the closest to Mozart's intentions, but is not free of faulty part-writing and orchestration. In $2016\,$ a young French composer, Pierre-Henri Dutron, persuaded René Jacobs to perform his own revision of the Requiem completed by Süssmayr. This new version was created with great success in a series of five concerts around Europe in November 2016. We now present its first studio recording, released exclusively on harmonia mundi.



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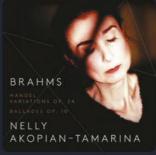




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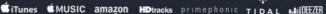












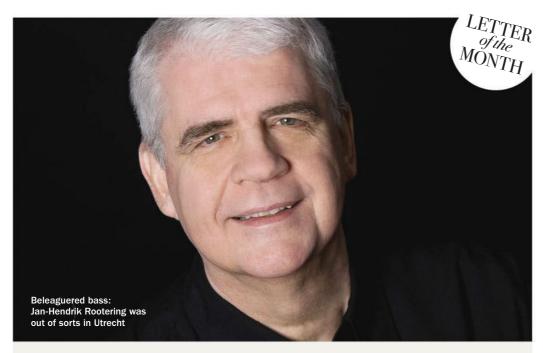


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Have your say...

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A Babi Yar to remember

Reading your item on calamitous cancellations (December issue) brought back to me the following sweet memory.

In April 2005, we attended a matinee

at the Concertgebouw. The main piece was Shostakovich's 'Babi Yar' Symphony performed by the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra under Mark Wigglesworth. At the entrance, we were informed that the bass soloist, Jan-Hendrik Rootering, had fallen ill; a replacement was flying in from Switzerland. During the extended interval, it transpired that this replacement could not sing the symphony in the way that Mark Wigglesworth and

orchestra had rehearsed it, so in his place the Dutch baritone Henk Smit eventually sang the part. He gave a wonderful and exciting rendering, despite a mobile phone ringing during the performance.

> Afterwards it transpired that Smit had almost literally been dragged from rehearsals in the studios of the Dutch National Opera. Rootering had sung the same work in Utrecht the night before, a performance that was released on disc as part of Wigglesworth and the orchestra's Shostakovich cycle. Your positive review of the CD mentioned him as a slightly disappointing soloist. I knew the reason.

Tjark Reininga

Utrecht, the Netherlands

Life is but a stream

I was pleased to see that you have given extensive coverage to music streaming services in the December issue. I subscribe to two of the services you like. I do think Qobuz is the comfortable (audio) winner at the moment, and the Berlin Philharmonic's Digital Concert Hall is also excellent.

A mindset change is required to get the most out of streaming. I may have hundreds of CDs on my shelves, but not much pleasure in their presence any more - as I can listen to almost anything I want whenever I want through a streaming service, I'm afraid I now look on ownership of the physical medium as a bit like stamp collecting. However, I do recognise that the methodology for rewarding artists for their efforts is not yet where it needs to be.

Paul Graber, Guildford The editor replies:

We are pleased you enjoyed our coverage. See also the reaction on social media ('Social Gathering' right).

Greek gifts

I really enjoyed Nick Shave's article about Sani in Greece and its music festival (November). I have been long familiar with music festivals taking place in Greece, mostly in Athens, but not with this particular one. It's really comforting to know that, in a country that was hit so hard





WIN A DIGITAL RADIO! Every month the editor will award a Geneva Lab Touring S radio (retail value £170 - see www.genevalab.com) to the writer of the best letter received. The editor reserves the right to shorten letters for publication.

by the financial crisis on the one hand and by the refugee crisis on the other, there are still people who struggle and try to promote music, art and culture at both a local and at an international level.

While it's true that Greece does not have a long history as far as classical and jazz music is concerned. I believe it has a lot of potential and eventually lots of composers and artists will emerge. The country can already boast Kalomiris, Skalkoytas and Xenakis, to name just to name a few.

I hope the Sani music festival continues for many years to come and that many new festivals and events arise from this.

Ioanna Kvprianidou. Nicosia, Cyprus

Movie masterpieces

Could I make a request for a regular film music slot, roughly along the lines of your jazz slot? Every month some wonderful new recordings come along, of both past and present scores, which deserve attention and are often causes of celebration. After all, Radio 3 has its regular film music spot on Saturday afternoons, with Matthew Sweet's always entertaining and informative Sounds of Cinema, so it would be great if your magazine would follow suit.

Neil Sinyard, Saxby All Saints

Silence is golden

With regards to Tom Service's column on silence in music (December), I recently attended two lunchtime concerts given by the Artemis Piano Trio, who are BBC New Generation Artists. The second concert, of

Beethoven and Mendelssohn trios, was, yes, excellently played but as soon as the concert was finished there was a race as to who would be the first to clap. What a contrast with the first concert, in which the trio were joined by clarinettist Annelien Van Wauwe (below). Here, at the conclusion of Messiaen's Quartet for The End of Time, there was total and profound silence for quite a few seconds. Wonderful! Why must there always otherwise be this rush to applaud? Plus, please give a thought to us music lovers who suffer from tinnitus, who never really hear complete silence! Richard Ord,

Mighty Rattle

Stratford Upon Avon

I was struck by the editor's letter in December (on how a single performance can change one's perception of a work]. It brought to mind Schoenberg's Gurrelieder at this year's BBC Proms under Sir Simon Rattle. That transformation in one's perception of the story and the music was reinforced in watching and listening to the broadcast on BBC Four. I reckon the BBC should issue a CD or a DVD of the performance. It was a truly remarkable evening's listening. Graham Lomas, via email

Volatile composer

With regards to the misprint on the front cover of your December

issue CD ('Music by Barber, Ethyl Smyth and Gershwin'), while Ethel Smyth no doubt had a fiery personality, perhaps equating the English composer to a volatile hydrocarbon took the analogy a step too far?



SOCIAL GATHERING What's being said on Twitter & Facebook



In December, we asked you whether you believe streaming is the way forward for classical music, or if CDs are here to stay. Here are some of your replies:

Streaming is like borrowing from a library, a bought CD is mine to keep forever. Both have their place. Jenny D (@J3nesis)

Both. Provided the CDs still play, they'll be used. I still use LPs occasionally. If I need content, I'm flexible with regard to medium.

Ryan Ross (@RMRoss17)

Streaming also means bad sound, very limited choice, no contextualisation of any kind, no respect for the work of the artist. I still buy CDs when I want to listen to music.

Isabel Pato

I'd like to think CDs were here for a while. I don't like the idea of streaming, I like to have a physical album I can

Larry Shone (@larry_shone)

II do both. I find that packaging makes a difference: Jordi Savall (pictured above) CDs with accompanying booklets and Mission by Cecilia Bartoli, for example, MozartFX (@mozartfx)

II think streaming is on the rise, although I am still buying CDs. John Williams

CD for car, streaming everywhere else **Conor Farrington** (@ConorFarrington)

Or perhaps it was a case of the beloved old poem:

YYUR,

YYUB,

ICUR.

YY4 me?

Andrew Davenport, Croydon. The editor replies:

This is the wittiest response we've had to our unfortunate lapse. We appreciate the poetic touch and can only apologise again for the error!

Worth the Risko

The recent changes in the magazine do give it a freshness, and I am getting used to the larger print. I notice that Composer of the Month has artwork by Matt Herring, with a very fine portrait. It has been lovely, though, to have such a long series of illustrations by Risko with a unique style of

characterisation in this series. I remember a calendar with some of the early ones, but feel they are so good that they merit publication as a collection. Roy Braithwaite, Mellor

Brilliant Brum

In your excellent article about the new Birmingham Conservatoire building (November) you gave a brief overview of other music activities in this lively city. You could also have mentioned that the Hippodrome is home to the Birmingham Royal Ballet which performs there regularly, creating new ballets and commissioning new music, and Birmingham is also the home of the superb Ex Cathedra choir. There is a lot of music here! Mike Ashlev. Solihull

GREAT GIFT IDEAS



THREE TRAGEDIES SHAKESPEARE

Royal Shakespeare Company

Rising star Paapa Essiedu gives a stunning performance in Simon Godwin's *Hamlet*; Antony Sher leads the way as the proud but fatally flawed monarch in Gregory Doran's acclaimed *King Lear*, Iqbal Khan's astonishing and groundbreaking production of *Othello*, featuring Hugh Quarshie in the title role.

DVD SET | BLU-RAY SET



NORMA BELLINI

Royal Opera House

Star soprano Sonya Yoncheva sings the towering role of Bellini's Norma – a priestess torn between love and duty – in a timeless tale of love and betrayal. The spectacular production by Àlex Ollé stars a superb cast including Joseph Calleja and Brindley Sherratt, conducted by Antonio Pappano.

DVD | BLU-RAY



ANASTASIA TCHAIKOVSKY

Royal Opera House

Royal Ballet Principal Natalia Osipova dances the title role in Kenneth MacMillan's haunting ballet, to atmospheric music by Tchaikovsky and Martinů. Anastasia tells the story of Anna Anderson who, following the Russian Revolution and the murder of the royal family, claimed she was the surviving Grand Duchess Anastasia.

DVD | BLU-RAY



THE TEMPESTSHAKESPEARE

Royal Shakespeare Company

On a distant island, a man waits. Robbed of his position, power and wealth, his enemies have left him in isolation. But this is no ordinary man or ordinary island. Simon Russell Beale returns to the RSC after 20 years to play Prospero. Directed by Artistic Director Gregory Doran.

DVD | BLU-RAY



WILLIAM TELL ROSSINI

Royal Opera House

Antonio Pappano, Music Director of The Royal Opera, conducts Rossini's epic final masterpiece of French grand opera *William Tell*. Featuring an all-star cast that includes Gerald Finley in the title role, alongside John Osborn, Malin Byström and Sofia Fomina.

DVD | BLU-RAY



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BÉATRICE ET BÉNÉDICTBERLIOZ

Glyndebourne

Through the eye of French director Laurent Pelly this expression of Berlioz's undying admiration for the Bard — his adaptation of Much Ado about Nothing as an opéra comique — becomes 'an elegant treatise on love and music designed in shades of grey with 50s-era costumes' (Sunday Express ****).

DVD | BLU-RAY



PUCCINI BOX SET LA BOHÈME · TOSCA MADAMA BUTTERFLY

In lavish productions from Madrid's Teatro Real, Jesús López Cobos directs an outstanding cast in *La bohème*. Daniela Dessì plays the fiery singer *Tosca* in Nuria Espert's staging of lust, betrayal and revenge, while Cheryl Barker and Martin Thompson are at the helm of an inspired cast in *Madama Butterfly*.

DVD SET

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The full score

Our pick of the month's news, views and interviews

BBC Radio 2 Young Choristers crowned

Handel and Bach bring competition success in Manchester



A touch of Baroque proved the formula for success at this year's BBC Radio 2 Young Choristers of the Year competition, which has been won by Raphael Bellamy Plaice and Ischia Gooda. In the grand final, which was this year staged at the BBC Philharmonic Studios at Media City in Salford, the two singers were placed first in the boys' and girls' categories after wowing the judges with performances of impressive vocal control and musicality. Each took home a trophy on the evening and will also see their efforts further rewarded with the opportunity to appear in various BBC programmes over the year.

Bellamy Plaice, a former head chorister of Chichester Cathedral who is now at

Lancing College in Sussex, tackled the many testing twists and turns of 'But who may abide' from Handel's Messiah for his final performance, plus the Easter hymn Now the green blade riseth. Commenting on

'The performances from all the young singers in the final were wonderful'

the Handel in particular, soprano Lynne Dawson, the chair of the judges, enthused that 'In the coloratura the fast notes the intonation was exceptionally good. It was absolutely fabulous.' Gooda, a pupil of Rugby School, opted for the gentler-paced

charms of Bach/Gounod's Ave Maria and the hymn Be Thou my vision.

Though the format has changed over the years, this was the 31st year in which the BBC contest had been broadcast and the 20th in which boys and girls had appeared together in the final. Alongside Dawson on the jury were composer and comedian Vikki Stone and composer Simon Lole, a former director of music at Sheffield and Salisbury cathedrals. 'The performances from all the young singers in the final were wonderful, proving that age is no barrier when it comes to ability and talent,' said Dawson. 'The opportunities provided by BBC Radio 2 Young Choristers will hopefully see these talented performers move from strength to strength.'

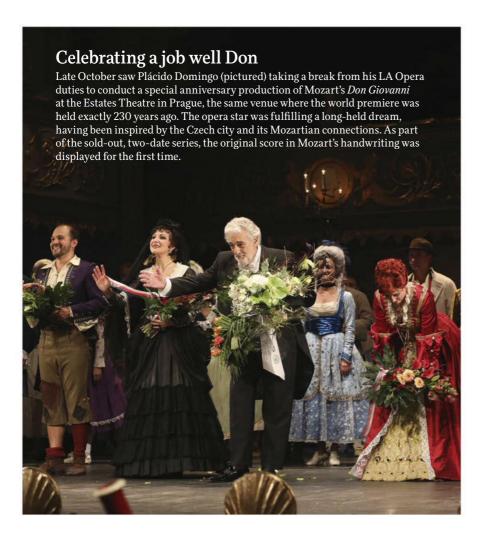
Young Chorister 2017 The finalists



Joseph Henry (Canterbury Cathedral) Raphael Bellamy Plaice (Lancing College) John Morshead (Temple Church, London) Christopher Trotter (All Saints Church, Northampton)

Emilia Jaques (Ripon Cathedral) Hannah Dienes-Williams (Guildford Cathedral)

Charlotte Moore (All Saints Church, Putney) Ischia Gooda (Rugby School)



THE MONTH IN NUMBERS



MINIM-UK, a 'virtual museum' documenting instruments from over 200 collections in Britain, has been launched by the Royal College of Music. The oldest date from around 3,000 BC.

...bells featured on stage in Chicago on 12 November. The occasion? The world premiere of Augusta Read Thomas's Sonorous Earth.

...different composers are nominated in this year's British Composer Awards, a record number.

...days of festive music. From 1 December, visit ORA's website for an advent calendar with a difference: each day features the choir singing a work by a living composer.

Rising Stars

Three to look out for...

Simon Höfele Trumpeter



Born: Groß-Umstadt, near Darmstadt, Germany Career highlight: Playing Haydn's Trumpet Concerto with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Semyon Bychkov in 2015. It was such a blast

for me and even now I get excited about when I think back to it!

Music hero: Both my teacher Reinhold Friedrich, for being a great and never-ending inspiration, and my parents who gave me all these opportunities.

Dream concert: I enjoy performing on every stage, but I do think that playing a concerto at a venue like the BBC Proms would be very nice indeed.

Noa Wildschut Violinist



Born: Hilversum, The Netherlands Career highlight: A visit to a school in the povertystricken favelas in Brazil. As the children got the opportunity to play a string instrument, I was

touched by seeing how much joy, love and light the music gave to them.

Musical hero: The two people I learned the most from are violinists Janine Jansen and Anne-Sophie Mutter. Since 2015 I have been a scholar in the Anne-Sophie Mutter foundation, and I've known Janine Jansen since I was a little girl.

Dream concert: A concert with young musicians and an audience drawn from all over the world, all equal to each other, and all celebrating the power of music and its ability to bring people together. See review, p89

Filippo Gorini Pianist



Born: Near Milan, Italy Career highlight: Standing on stage, exhausted, after the final round of the Beethoven Competition, when the winners were announced. Musical hero: My

teacher, Maria Grazia Bellocchio, who has inspired me to work hard and to deepen my knowledge of music. I've inherited from her my love for modern and contemporary music in particular.

Dream concert: A cycle of Beethoven Sonatas alternated with prominent works from the 20th century and contemporary composers. I would like this to happen in a modern hall, such as the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie. See review, p105

SoundBites



Weill cheese

A previously unknown song by Kurt Weill has been discovered in a Berlin university archive. The three-page manuscript of Lied vom weissen Käse ('Song of the white cheese') has proved a delightful surprise to experts, who had previously thought the song was a figment of the imagination of Weill's wife, the singer Lotte Lenya. Though Lenya always said she recalled singing the work, written in the 1930s, her memory was not considered reliable.

Opera hunt

A search has been launched, meanwhile, for the third act of Edith Cavell, a 1927 opera about the British nurse executed by the Germans for helping British soldiers to escape in World War. Two acts of the work by Maltese composer Paolino Vassallo are owned by the Norfolk Record Office which says it hopes the third and final part can be traced for research purposes.

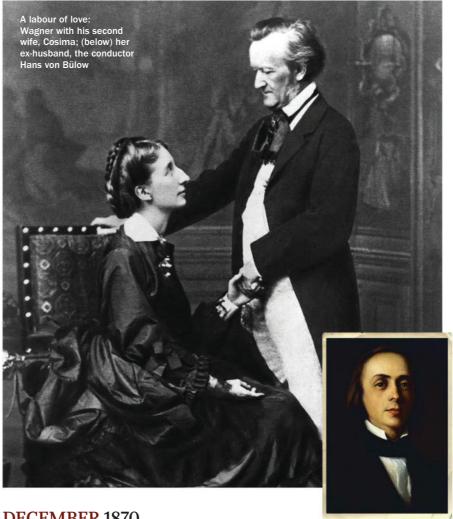
Calling time

Conductor Michael Tilson Thomas, who has been music director of the San Francisco Symphony since 1995, has announced that he will be stepping down from the post in 2020, his 25th anniversary year. 'I am filled with gratitude for the extraordinary artistic partnership I have had with the members of the orchestra,' says MTT about their long and successful time together.

Tutti footy

The players of the Berlin Philharmonic and Dresden Staatskapelle orchestras are not just skilled with their hands. As this issue goes to press, we learn that a team formed from the two ensembles recently played the Shanghai Symphony at football and, being German, won easily. Clarinettist Andreas Ottensamer bagged a hat-trick in the 4-0 victory.

TIMEPIECE This month in history



DECEMBER 1870

Wagner's Siegfried Idyll makes a perfect musical gift

n Christmas Day, 1870, the sounds of Wagner's Siegfried *Idyll* wafted up the staircase of a villa in Switzerland. This beautiful piece which has become arguably the composer's best-loved orchestral work was a gift from Wagner, written and rehearsed in secret, for Cosima, his second wife. The premiere might have been a private and personal event, but Wagner had ensured it would be memorable, enlisting 15 (it's thought most likely) instrumentalists from the prestigious Tonhalle Orchester

Zürich, including the famous conductor Hans Richter on trumpet. 'Music was sounding, and what music!' recalled Cosima of the day. 'After it had died away, R... put into my hands the score of his "Symphonic Birthday Greeting"."

Yes, birthday greeting. For although this was a festive occasion, the music in fact marked Cosima's birthday, which fell on 24 December but which she always celebrated on Christmas Day. The pair had special reason to mark 1870, too, as after a complicated six-year relationship and three children together,

they had finally married on 25 August at the protestant church in Lucerne.

For them, it was a respectable seal of approval on a scandalous relationship. Cosima and Richard had first encountered each other in 1853 when she was a teenager, and he came to visit her father, the composer Franz Liszt. In the 1860s they fell in love. Wagner was still married to Minna Planer although his extra-marital dalliances had effectively ended this relationship - while Cosima had married the conductor Hans von Bülow. A great champion of Wagner's music, it was, ironically, thanks to Von Bülow that Wagner and Cosima started to spend time together. In November 1863, 'with tears and sobs,' wrote Wagner, 'we sealed our confession to belong to each other alone'. They embarked on an affair.

In 1865, King Ludwig II of Bavaria became Wagner's patron. At the composer's suggestion, Von Bülow was taken on as 'royal pianist' while Cosima ostensibly became Wagner's secretary. They all moved to Munich. By then, the penny had dropped for Von Bülow, his suspicions cemented rather belatedly by the birth of Isolde, Cosima's first child

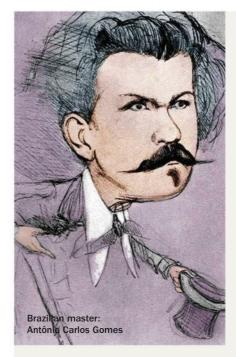
Birthday wishes: an artist's impression of Wagner conducting the Siegfried Idyll for Cosima on the front steps of Tribschen in 1870, as shown in an advert for Liebig's meat extract

with Wagner, in April 1865. Yet Von Bülow conducted the premiere of *Tristan* und Isolde that June, and legally accepted Isolde as his own. Public denials including a royal decree of Wagner and Cosima's relationship followed, but privately it continued. Eva was born in 1867, Siegfried in 1868. By then Wagner had been forced into exile in Switzerland and moved into Tribschen, the villa by Lake Lucerne. Cosima joined him for good in 1868, applying for a divorce which came through on 18 July 1870.

The music marked Cosima's birthday which she always celebrated on Christmas Day

Which brings us back to the Siegfried *Idyll*. In its original form, this singlemovement piece of around 20 minutes was for five woodwind, three brass instruments and a string quintet. Wagner drew on the final act of his opera Siegfried for some of the musical material, and also worked in personal references, including the German lullaby 'Sleep, baby, sleep'. And while Wagner had intended his tender, warm Idvll for Cosima's ears only, in 1878 he found himself short of money. He expanded the orchestration to 35 parts, and sold it to the publisher B Schott.





Also in December 1870

2nd: Antônio Carlos Gomes's Il Guarany, the first opera by a Brazilian composer to enjoy significant acclaim, receives an ecstatic reception when it is staged for the first time in its home country. The performance at Rio de Janeiro's Teatro D Pedro II follows the work's world premiere at Milan's La Scala earlier in the year.

4th: As the Franco-Prussian War rages on, the Second Battle of Orléans ends in defeat for the French. As a result, the Prussians retake the city, which they had lost less than a month earlier at the Battle of Coulmiers. Defeat also sees the French army on the Loire split in two.

5th: The French author and playwright Alexandre Dumas dies at the age of 68. As well as the classics The Three Musketeers (1844) and The Count of Monte Cristo (1845), his prodigious output included various non-fiction works such as travelogues from Italy and Russia.

26th: Thirteen years after drilling began at either end, French and Italian workers shake hands as they meet in the middle of the Fréjus railway tunnel. At over eight miles long, the tunnel provides a new route through the Alps and is an important link between the cities of Paris and Rome.

28th: Juan Prim y Prats, the prime minister of Spain and a major champion of a democratic constitution in the country, is shot by two men as he leaves the chamber of the Cortes (parliament) in Madrid. He dies two days later.

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2017 RELEASES

























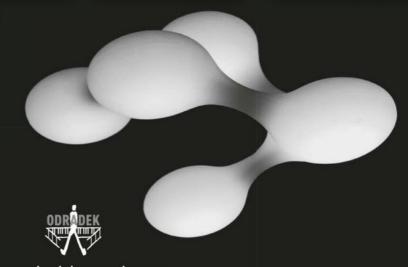
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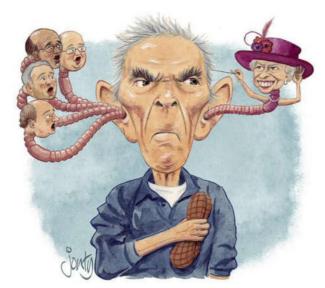
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A very regal earworm

Have pity on Ron Goldspink, an 87 year-old from Hull, who has had the sound of a male voice choir singing God Save the Queen repeatedly rattling round his head for four whole months. Goldspink's earworm has been diagnosed as a rare form of tinnitus - whether

one is a royalist or not, most would agree that such a National Antheminflicted ordeal is anything but happy and glorious. 'Sometimes it's really loud and deafening, but other times it is quiet,' he says about the unwelcome choral rendition, which he hears in a 49-second loop. 'It hurts just to think.'

DÉJÀ VU

History just keeps on repeating itself...



Operatic history was recently made in Salford, where Alan Edwards Williams's The Arsonists had its world premiere: with a libretto by poet (and Radio 3 presenter) Ian McMillan (left), it is believed to be the first opera ever written that requires the cast to sing in a Yorkshire accent. This unique trait grabbed a few headlines, but it's by no means the first time that the subject of words in opera has got people talking...

In the 18th century, the philosopher (and occasional composer) Jean-Jacques Rousseau pronounced that the French language was simply unsuited to the artform – its vowels and consonant were, he said, too weak. As if to then purposely defeat his own argument, he himself wrote an opera, Le devin du village, with a French libretto. It proved a huge hit. In 1870, people gathered in London for the city's premiere of Wagner's The flying Dutchman. So was it performed in original German language, or an English translation? Neither. As it was staged during an Italian opera season, the audience were instead treated to, yes, L'Olandese dannato. In 1983, Canadian Opera was the first to use English surtitles to translate foreign librettos. But in 2005, when English National Opera, who sing exclusively in English, introduced surtitles to clarify its singers' words, there was something of a hoohah. Finally, when Mark-Anthony Turnage's Greek was premiered in 1988, its director Jonathan Moore hoped its cockney accents and ripe language would 'cause an uproar'. Instead, it got a 12-minute standing ovation.

MEET THE COMPOSER

Roxanna Panufnik



Roxanna Panufnik was born in London and studied at the Royal Academy of Music. Her varied works includes a mass for Westminster Cathedral Choir and a concerto for violinist Tasmin Little. Her choral piece setting Sir John Tavener's 99 Words to my Darling Children is out now on Signum Classics.

I first met the composer John Tavener in 1999 on a photoshoot for BBC Music Magazine! He was a wonderful man of gravitas and deep spirituality, with a mischievous sense of humour. I was struck by how like my late father [composer Andrzej Panufnik] he was. When John died, Westminster Abbey put on a beautiful memorial service, and his daughter Theodora read his 99 words to my Darling Children. I felt such empathy with these words. Later, John's widow Maryanna said I could set them. I'm eternally grateful. My best composing time is

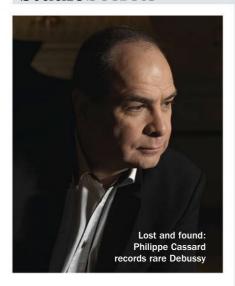
Monday morning. I have to be incredibly focused and disciplined as I have three children and a limited amount of time in which to compose. I do stuff with them at the weekends and then when they're off to school my brain is refreshed. It works out really well.

Musical moods and atmospheres are what come first. I'm writing an oratorio in English, Polish and Latin at the moment to celebrate Poland's

centenary as an independent state next year. I use a quirky mode in it that crops up in a lot of Polish folk music. It sounds like someone is playing it with a raised eyebrow. My faith didn't come to me until my early 20s. It's a very big part of my life. I go to mass every week, my daughter and I sing in our local church choir and I met my husband on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. My son is a chorister at Westminster Abbey so I spend a lot of time in Anglican services as well as Catholic ones. I love it, particularly the musical atmosphere. It's a great place to be still and to think.

Writing my opera Silver Birch was the most amazing, happy experience. I don't think anything could have prepared me for seeing and hearing people sing it the first time. I went to a rehearsal at Garsington and 180 people were singing the Silver Birch song. I burst into uncontrollable floods of tears. The power of all these people singing so beautifully was almost too much to bear.

StudioSecrets



We reveal who's recording what, and where...

Several premiere recordings feature on a new complete set of Debussy's music, released in January 2018 by Warner Classics. The 33-CD box includes the rediscovered Chansons des brises for soprano solo, female chorus and piano four-hands, which the young Debussy wrote for Marie Vasnier, with whom he was in love. The original manuscript was lost but in 2010 the pianist *Philippe Cassard* was given a handwritten copy, made by Debussy's publisher, corrected by Debussy himself.

Love Vivaldi, but sick of *The Four Seasons*? Then the relaunch of Naïve record's Vivaldi Edition will be music to your ears. This project to record all 450 works in Vivaldi's manuscript library - thought to be the largest collection of music by an 18th-century composer - continues with the opera Dorilla in Tempe, conducted by **Diego Fasolis**.

Back in 2010, pianist **Dejan Lazić** arranged Brahms's Violin Concerto for piano. He was inspired by Beethoven's own arrangement of his Violin Concerto for piano, which Lazić has now recorded for the label Onyx. He's paired it with Cramer's Sonata 'retour à Londres' and Clementi's Sonata No. 2.

Colin Currie has launched his own record label. The British percussionist hopes to showcase the percussion repertoire in all its glory, from solo pieces to concertos. Contemporary British music will be another focus, but to kick things off the Colin Currie Group is recording Steve Reich's Drumming. 'It will be, I am sure, the best recording of Drumming ever made,' says Reich.

'Phenomenal young singers... Medtner next please!' wrote our critic David Nice in 2014, after hearing Delphian's Rachmaninov songs set. We asked, they listened. And so pianist *Iain Burnside* has joined forces with another sextet of singers, three of whom were on the Rachmaninov disc, for 50 of Medtner's songs.





REWIND

Great artists talk about their past recordings

This month: JOHN ELIOT GARDINER Conductor

MY FINEST MOMENT

Rameau Les Boréades

Philip Langridge, Jean-François Leroux, Jennifer Smith, Stephen Varcoe et al; Monteverdi Choir; English Baroque Soloists/John Eliot Gardiner Erato 2292 45572 2 (1982)

As a student in Paris in the late '60s, I spent hours in the Bibliothèque national (BN) looking at the manuscripts of Rameau's operas. It was there that I first came across the manuscript of his final opera, Les Boréades, semi-buried in the library and never performed during Rameau's lifetime, or at any other time! I was even told by the director of the BN that transcribing it was a complete waste of my time and that it was the work of an impoverished imagination. I ignored him and got permission to perform it in concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in 1975; that caused quite a stir with musicians and public alike, because it really is his masterpiece. But could I get the major record labels interested? That this recording exists at all is down to my persistence and making myself such a nuisance with Erato. They eventually succumbed and we recorded in Aix-en-Provence in between stage performances. We were recording in the old town theatre which didn't have any air conditioning this was in August – and we had to dismantle all

the recording equipment, music stands and everything else in between sessions because we were fitting them between stage performances in the Théâtre de l'Archevêché. It was very tense and



very difficult, but it still resonates with me. The stage performances were amazing and a lot of that has been captured on record.

MY FONDEST MEMORY

Mozart Le nozze di Figaro

Bryn Terfel, Alison Hagley, Rodney Gilfry, Hillevi Martinpelto, Pamela Helen Stephen et al; Monteverdi Choir; English Baroque Soloists/John Eliot Gardiner DG Archiv 439 8712 (1993)

Far too often as a working conductor your work takes you away from home for weeks on end, which makes it really tough on everybody in the family. In 1993 I was due to conduct Figaro in different theatres across Europe as part of a seven-year project to stage, perform and record all seven of Mozart's mature operas. Liz, my wife at the time, and I decided to take our three children out of school for the whole summer, so they could take part in the stage productions of Figaro in Lisbon and Paris where we were performing. At the time Francesca was nine, Josie was seven and Briony was just four; they had walk-on parts as adorable mini Cherubinos, as it were, and they also sang in the choruses. Living in the opera all summer and what an opera it is! meant they got to know Figaro pretty well by heart, and they loved it. They also got to know



and befriend the entire cast really well. Although the recording was made at a subsequent, semi-staged concert performance at

the Queen Elizabeth Hall which my daughters didn't directly take part in, I rather feel they were very much a part of that wonderful team which made the whole experience incredibly special for me. Even though all three of my daughters now have distinguished non-musical careers, they are intensely musical, and seemingly the music of Mozart's Figaro has never left them.

I'D LIKE ANOTHER GO AT...

Handel Semele

Norma Burrowes, Della Jones, Anthony Rolfe-Johnson; Monteverdi Choir; English Baroque Soloists/ John Eliot Gardiner Erato 2292 45982 2 (1981)

This is one of several Handel oratorios I recorded with the period instruments of the English Baroque Soloists during the time I was artistic director of the Göttingen Handel Festival in Germany. Handel wrote the music for Semele in just over a month, from June to July 1743 but it contains music of such alluring beauty, and it's got amazing, wonderful choruses as well. Semele comes closer to an opera than any of Handel's other English oratorios, even though it was presented in his day as a concert entertainment or in the manner of an oratorio. The best thing about the recording was having Tony Rolfe-



Johnson as Jupiter, who is absolutely peerless, and Della Iones (below) as Juno, who nearly stole the show. But I can't believe that I

acquiesced to Erato's desire to confine it to two discs making incredibly savage cuts, involving about 40 minutes of mostly top quality music. It's ages since I've done any Handel and I miss him. There's an admirable new generation of really accomplished Handel singers around, and you'd be spoilt for choice in casting the roles it would give me a chance to restore the cuts I had to make back then.



Powerful role: Della Jones impresses as Juno

BuriedTreasure



Soprano Emma Kirkby on three musical rarities from her record collection

Perez Mattutino dei morti

Ghislieri Choir and Consort/Giulio Prandi DHM 88843051022

I was given this CD when I performed in Pavia, Italy, and was dumbstruck by it. This work was written in 1770 for the



Court of Portugal's annual pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Nossa Senhora do Cabo outside Lisbon. Perez wrote many operas in Naples

and then went to Lisbon to be the king's master of music. The Mattutino dei morti is the full office for the dead, of which the Requiem is just a part, and this disc consists of three 'notturni' (nights). The music itself is stunning, as are the performances here.

Lawes Consorts to the organ

Phantasm Linn CKD399 Any music by William Lawes is extraordinary to listen to, but I treasure his version of Downland's Lachrimae



pavan - it takes that beautiful piece and then just runs with it and turns it into a further fantasy. Lawes was a favourite composer of Charles

I, remained with the king during the Civil War and was killed fighting for him at the Siege of Chester. Had he lived longer, he would have been extremely famous I think but, except for the cognoscenti, people today don't tend to know him.

Haves The Passions Chor der Schola Cantorum

Basiliensis/Anthony Rooley Glossa GCD922501

My colleague Anthony Rooley is always searching for stuff that no one has ever heard of, such as this! William Hayes was a contemporary of Handel. In this 'Ode to Music', every passion gets to sing – Fear, Anger, Despair, Hope, Revenge, Jealousy, Melancholy, Cheerfulness, Joy - before Reason comes along and says that



balance is needed to sort people out. It's great if you have a clutch of individual singers, as there are lovely arias for each one.

THE LISTENING SERVICE

The sounds of Christmas



Christmas is the time for nostalgia, and what better conjures up log fires, good cheer and community spirit than seasonal music, asks Radio 3's Tom Service

ILLUSTRATION: MARIA CORTE MAIDAGAN

I hink of Christmas, and what's the first thing that comes into your head? Undercooked overstuffed poultry, deltoids of rose-coloured fish, vats of prosecco and buckets of indigestion tablets? I reckon even before your mind has got to the post-prandial Trivial Pursuit, there's a sound that has entered your brain: a carol by John Rutter or Mendelssohn, a Christmas pop classic by George Michael or Slade, a tinkling sleighbell, or pealing church bells all of them part of the sonic landscape of the festive rituals of our real and imagined pasts. It's as if there are certain sounds that simply mean 'Christmas', a collection of musical madeleines de Noël, if you like.

They're all fictions, of course: there is nothing in these tunes or sounds that makes them more or less 'Christmassy' than others if someone had found the secret of what makes a melody the embodiment of Christmas, they'd be very rich. (Some of them, like Noddy Holder or Mariah Carey, no doubt are!) But the origins of the tunes that we sing often couldn't be further from yuletide: O little town of Bethlehem is really a lusty folksong called The ploughboy's dream that Vaughan Williams collected at a pub before he turned it into a carol; Hark! The Herald started as a Lutheran melody that Mendelssohn composed for a cantata to celebrate 400 years of Gutenberg's printing press: celebratory, maybe, but festive? Hardly. It's only decades of communal participation in performing these tunes that makes them imprinted on our Christmas-



consciousnesses. Imagine singing either tune outside Advent: it's just not on, is it?

It's the same with the deluge of pop tracks on adverts and trailers which turn every December into the musical equivalent of too much comfort food: the aural mince pies and figgy pudding

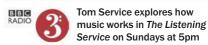
There is nothing in these tunes that makes them more 'Christmassy' than others

of Bing Crosby's crooning and The Pogues' Fairvtale of New York. We are all force-fed the sounds of joyful Christmas-time, like it or not.

And yet: the endless repetition of this repertoire, and the odd newcomer that manages to make it into the mainstream

like Rutter's brand of instant nostalgia in his new-minted carols that distil the DNA of Christmas in just a few lines

makes its own magic. These rituals mark the year's end, whether your Christmas is a sacred rite or a secular indulgence, and through their over-familiarity, we make connections across communities and cultures that are rare at other times. And in the idealistic fantasy land that these songs and sounds inhabit, they bring us into a Christmas snow globe of logs by the fire and good cheer that never really existed. It's music's power to latch itself on to our real memories, and to create virtual emotional narratives of nostalgia that is the secret weapon of the Christmas industries of church and commerce. Resistance is futile, unless you're a Scrooge, like me but then we have the masochism of New Year's resolutions to look forward to... @



FAREWELL TO ...



Sir John Manduell Born 1928 Composer and arts administrator In an extraordinarily busy and productive career, John Manduell somehow found time to compose - his Double Concerto (1985) and String Quartet (1970) are two of his more notable works to have been recorded. However, it was as the first ever principal of the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) that he will be best remembered. After beginning his working life at the BBC, where he reached the position of chief planner of the Music Programme, Manduell took up his post at the RNCM in 1973, when the conservatoire had just been created from the amalgamation of the Royal Manchester College and Northern School of Music. The new institution flourished under his direction and, following his retirement in 1996, continues to do so. He enjoyed similar success at the Cheltenham Music Festival where, as programme director from 1969-94, Manduell championed new music, commissioning over 300 works. He also played a key role in helping to set up Venezuela's El Sistema music education programme in 1975.

Michel Chapuis Born 1930 Organist

French and German Baroque repertoire was the calling-card of Michel Chapuis, whose extensive list of recordings included the complete organ works of JS Bach alongside less familiar turn-of-the-18thcentury composers such as Jacques Boyvin and Jean-Adam Guilain. An influential figure in the period performance movement, a number of his recordings were made on historic instruments specially chosen to match the works in question. Born in Dôle in eastern France, Chapuis studied with Marcel Dupré at the Conservatoire de Paris before holding various church posts in Paris, not least at St Séverin where, from 1964, he was titular organist for over 30 years. In 1995, he was appointed organist of the Versailles Royal Chapel and also enjoyed a successful career as a touring concert organist. A formidably talented improviser – he won the premier prix in improvisation at the Paris Conservatoire in 1951 - he also made CD recordings of his own music.

Also remembered...

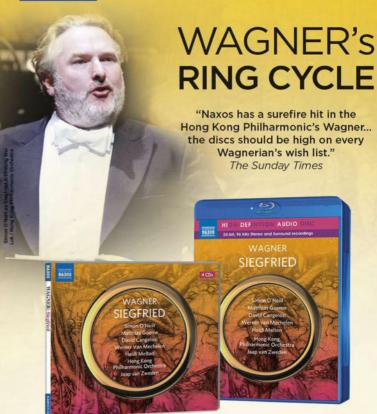
French pianist **Daria Hovora** (born 1947) was best known for chamber music, teaching and mentoring the likes of Renaud Capuçon, Adam Laloum and members of the Modigliani Quartet. She held the position of professor of chamber music at the Paris Conservatoire, where she had previously studied alongside pianist Menham Pressler.

Familiar to many for his work on the music of the BBC's *Dr Who* series in the 1960s and '70s, Australian composer and conductor **Dudley** Simpson (born 1922) was musical director of the company that later became The Australian Ballet. He later moved to the UK to become principal conductor of the Royal Opera House orchestra.



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The full score





What the classical world has been listening to this month

Albion Quartet

Tamsin Waley-Cohen First

violin: I listen to music constantly

when I'm travelling. At the moment, I'm listening to the Takács Quartet's recordings of Beethoven and Haydn I find their playing irresistibly infectious and crammed with detail and imagination. I am also really enjoying early choral music, in particular Gli Angeli Genève's recording of Buxtehude. The harmonic language is extraordinary and the singing beautiful and moving. Emma Parker Second violin: As well as listening to jazz-funk bands like Steely Dan and Tower of Power, who always put a spring in my step, I like to listen to as many recordings as possible of the pieces our quartet are performing. The Busch Quartet are a current favourite for that. And then.

if I'm really honest, the music I'm listening to on repeat at the moment is Mary Poppins. It's the only thing that will stop my two little girls fighting in the car! Rosalind Ventris Viola: My late father loved Lieder and, on what would have been his 80th

'The beauty of Elgar's orchestration is played with such feeling by the Philharmonia'

birthday, I've been listening to baritone Christian Gerhaher and pianist Gerold Huber's *The Art* of Song. My favourite song at the moment is 'Frühlingstraum' from **Schubert**'s *Winterreise*. I love the way Schubert unfolds the story of Müller's poem, verse by verse. Schubert's quartets do exactly

READER CHOICE

As a former member

John Filsak Peterborough

of the Halifax Choral Society, I went to the choir's 200th anniversary concert at the Victoria Theatre. It was notable for a striking new piece by Philip Wilby, The Holy Face, an oratorio about John the Baptist. It was tuneful, dramatic and powerful, and I was taken aback by how it affected me on so many levels. Scored for large choir, plus children's choir, organ and orchestra (there is also a brass band version), it is surely a major addition to the oratorio repertoire. Choral societies should be queuing up to perform it.

this, too they seem to contain a narrative, and our challenge as a quartet is to convey this, even without any words.

Nathaniel Boyd Cello: Having finally set up my stereo system complete with record player, I often find myself wandering into Oxfam in search of records. My recent purchases include Sviatoslav Richter playing Schubert's Wanderer Fantasy and Sonata in A D664 and Toscanini's Beethoven symphonies. When working in my studio (I paint and sculpt), I listen to Toscana Classica on internet radio. I can't understand much of what they say but it's incredible to hear the music announced in Italian! The Albion Quartet has recently started a two-season residency

Ola Gieilo Composer



I've lately been re-listening to the Philhamornia Orchestra and conductor Giuseppe Sinopoli's fantastic

recording of the Elgar Cello Concerto, played by Mischa Maisky, and the *Enigma Variations*. Those two works have everything: drama, wit, virtuosity, lyricism and a heartfelt warmth. There's never a dull moment in the Variations, and the beauty of Elgar's orchestration is played with such clarity and feeling by the Philharmonia.

I've been enjoying an album by the Pat Metheny Group called *The Way Up.* Dating from 2005 it is, for me, the perfect album. It consists of just one work divided into four movements almost like a symphony in a jazz/fusion style and is the ultimate expression

of their kind of music. The group's sound incorporates everything from jazz to classical and folk, and is incredibly creative.

The music of the film composer Thomas Newman has always been a staple of my listening collection. I've enjoyed nearly all his scores, not least *The Shawshank*

Redemption and WALL-E, but at the moment I have been particularly listening to Saving Mr Banks. A lot of his music has a dreamlike quality and I love the way he incorporates improvisation into his scores - it gives his music a fresh and open feel.

I listen to a lot of movie scores in general, and another composer I like is **Dario Marianelli**, who has written a lot of music for films directed by Joe Wright such as Atonement, Pride and Prejudice and Anna Karenina. Pride and Prejudice contains some of the



READER CHOICE



Peter Starie Southsea

After a great recital of Haydn, Beethoven and Brahms performed by pianist Paul Lewis at the Portsmouth Guildhall, I've been listening to a couple of recorded versions (by Alfred Brendel and Stephen Kovacevich) of the Beethoven Bagatelles Op. 126 that Lewis performed. These are Beethoven's last piano pieces and are utterly sublime, displaying some of the traits of the great late piano sonatas and string quartets but in miniature. In a Q&A session, Lewis said that he had only recently started playing these pieces in concert. But his interpretations are worthy of comparison with his mentor, Brendel.

most beautiful piano music I've ever heard in a film score, and there's one track in it called 'The Secret Life of Daydreams' that is very impressionistic and simple. It reminds me of Chopin's Berceuse. Ola Gjeilo's new CD, Winter Songs, is reviewed this issue

Father Christmas



Let's begin with a piece about yours truly. With that ominous opening, dramatic eponymous solo

tenor role, characterful choral writing and even congregational hymn-singing at the end, Britten's cantata St Nicolas has everything one could ask for in a musical biography. And I can think of no better person to play me than the extraordinarily agile Allan Clayton on the recording by the Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, a performance that stirs and delights.

Composers are thin on the ground in my neck of the woods north of the Arctic Circle. But we can boast **Ole Olsen** who, hailing from the north Norwegian town of Hammerfest, was in his heyday in the late 19th century. His energetic, atmospheric Asquardsreien, which

has been recorded by the Arctic Philharmonic Orchestra under Christian Lindberg, depicts a herd of black horses galloping through the night, putting me in the mood for my own nocturnal travels.

And once I'm in the zone, as it were, next up is Sleigh Ride (Winter Night), a short orchestral work that **Delius** wrote while full of the joys of spending Christmas with Norwegian friends such as composers Grieg and Sinding. The piece begins friskily, complete with sleigh bells, before slowing down to enable us to admire the beautiful snowy views around us. I particularly like the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra's recording, under Andrew Davis.

While I'm up at chimney level, a work that springs to mind is Milhaud's ballet Le boeuf sur le toit (The bull on the roof), performed by the Orchestre National de France under Leonard Bernstein. With its South American rhythms and unlikely harmonies, it's great fun, if a little wacky. They say that bulls make a good alternative to reindeer and can be run at a fraction of the cost, but I've yet to find one with a red nose... Father Christmas is on world tour on the night of 24 December

Our Choices The BBC Music Magazine team's current favourites

Oliver Condy *Editor*

I love a bit of **Daquin** - the early 18th-century French organist and composer wrote a collection of Noëls: spritely variations based on traditional French Christmas songs. In the hands of the right organist, they explore every facet of the organ, and in a new Brilliant Classics recording by Adriano Falcioni on the 1789 Jean-Pierre Cavaillé organ of Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert Abbey in Hérault, France, no exquisite stop is left unplayed.

Jeremy Pound Deputy editor

Respighi's festive choral work Lauda per la Nativita shows the Italian composer doing just what he does best - combining music from times past with his own ideas to create something uniquely atmospheric. In this instance, we are invited to share the awe of the Nativity in a series of gentle arias and choruses, all weaved together by a bewitching, meandering oboe tune. Best enjoyed with a rich Barolo.

Rebecca Franks Reviews editor

One New Year's Eve, the composer Gerald Finzi climbed up to the church on Chosen Hill between Gloucester and Cheltenham. He heard midnight bells ringing out over the countryside - what could be more magical? They find their way into his In terra pax, 'a Christmas scene', which I've been enjoying on a Naxos recording with the City of London Choir and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hilary Davan Wetton. It's far more than an English pastoral picture postcard - Finzi imbues this evocative piece with a visionary hopefulness.

Alice Pearson Cover CD editor Honegger's Cantate de Noël has no tinsel trimming - the world is in turmoil as the chorus cries out

'de profundis' for salvation. Christ's arrival is heralded by angelic voices, unleashing a kaleidoscope of carols sung in different European languages, all fitting together seamlessly thanks to Honegger's canny counterpoint. A final hymn of praise in Latin leads us back to the depths, but now warmer and somehow more reassuring - it's great food for Christmas thought.

Neil McKim Production editor Searching for something with a wintry theme, dug out Der Schneemann ('The Snowman'),

a work that Korngold composed when he was just 11. It's a charming ballet about a poor violinist, Pierrot, who tries to win a girl's attention by disguising himself as a snowman. My recording, by the **BBC** Philharmonic under Matthias Bamert, features the Prelude and Act I, with its tender violin solo.

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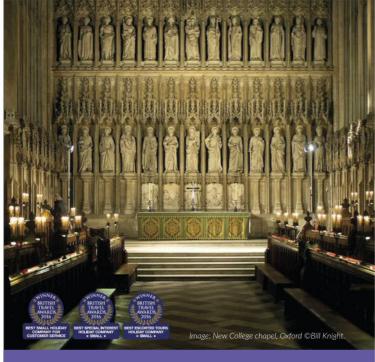
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Richard Morrison

Spare a thought for the church organist this Christmastide

eaders with elephantine memories and too much time on their hands may recall that I have a secret life. Well, not secret if you live in north London, where I have been making an unholy row in a holy place for 40-odd years. But secret in the sense that I rarely write about it, primarily because people's reactions can be quite unpredictable.

You see, I'm a church organist. 'Oh, I thought you said you had a musical hobby,' a distinguished conductor once guipped when I told him. That's one of the milder reactions. My newspaper colleagues aren't, on the whole, 'churchy' types (unless there's a scandal going on involving priests and sex which, admittedly, there usually is) and many ask me incredulously if spending every Sunday perched on a wooden stool enveloped by clouds of incense is a good use of my spare time.

They don't know the half of it. I also spend every Tuesday evening training the church choir. In all, I devote about ten hours a week to my 'night job', which I guess is about average for organists around the country. As I have done it since I was a callow youth, that's 20,000 hours of my life consumed by this labour of love. When the dying John Betjeman was asked if he had any regrets, he replied: 'Yes, I wish I'd had more sex'. More prosaically, I wish I'd had more Sunday morning lie-ins.

And it really is a labour of love. I see from Paul Riley's article elsewhere in this issue that, back in the 17th century, the composer Michael Praetorius (himself an organist) described organists as being 'treated as more contemptible and mean than the lowest unskilled labourer'. Nothing has changed! Even

at weddings and funerals the 'perks' of the job the organist will often be paid less than the catering staff or the gravediggers.

This isn't, though, intended to be a rant. If we didn't love adding those cheesy diminished sevenths to the last verses of hymns, or working the latest James Bond song into our improvisations after the gospel reading, or thundering out fugues so loudly after the service that the coffee-cups start rattling, we wouldn't do it.

In all, I devote about ten hours a week to my 'night job' - about average for organists

But I must admit to being daunted by what awaits me this December. Christmas is a demanding time for organists, but when Christmas Day falls on a Monday it really becomes something akin to one of those bizarre endurance feats you see on Japanese daytime television (minus the requirement to tow a truck by your genitals, of course). It means that the normal Sunday services merge almost without a break into the Christmas Eve ones, and then into Midnight Mass, four or five hours of fitful sleep, and the morning service on Christmas Day. That's an awful lot of ivory thumping.

In addition, each service brings its particular challenge. The children's Nativity play on Christmas Eve is traditionally done in candlelight, which means playing nine carols by memory

in the dark, all transposed down a couple of tones so the mums can make a courageous stab at the 'Gloria' of Ding-Dong Merrily on High.

Midnight Mass is fraught for different reasons. At the very moment when you want your choir sounding its best when you hope that the long hours rehearsing the soaring melismas of Sweelinck's Hodie or the hushed harmonies of Howells's A spotless rose will pay dividends the singers are at their worst. Booze and boisterousness are a disastrous combination in unaccompanied choral music.

Then there's the prospect of delivering a stirring final organ voluntary at 1am. In my prime I would rattle through Widor's Toccata so fast that nobody noticed I was fudging the fiddly left-hand figuration. In my 40s I realised that even fudge was beyond me, so I switched to Bach's chorale prelude *In dulci jubilo*, where extreme tempo changes forced by inadequate technique can be passed off as authentic Baroque style. Now, in my early 60s, I've switched again – to the voluntaries of 18th-century English composers who, admirably, didn't see the need for independent pedal parts.

I'm just hoping to avoid the fate of a predecessor who, after playing in Hendon for 50 years, had a fatal heart attack on Christmas morning, 1945 falling forwards onto the keys to produce a startling Messiaen-like discord in the middle of *Silent Night*. I've promised the choir that, should I peg out in similar fashion this Christmas. I will endeavour to fall backwards so the carols can continue a cappella. Richard Morrison is chief music critic and a columnist of The Times

FIGOUTH THE COULD

CLASSICAL FANS CAN AT LAST JOIN THE STREAMING REVOLUTION, THANKS TO IDAGIO

id those internet whizzkids of the 1990s know anything about classical music? Online music could only be catalogued as artist, album and track name. Fine for a song by David Bowie or Adele, but not for Vivaldi's Four Seasons, say. Is the 'artist' the composer. orchestra, soloist or conductor? Is the 'album' the CD title, or 'Four Seasons'? Is the 'track' 'Winter', or a movement? And the streaming revolution has largely ignored classical. It's the way millions of people worldwide listen to their music now: for a monthly subscription (roughly the cost of a CD), you can listen to everything from new albums to old classics, by streaming online, on your phone, in the car or at home. You choose tracks yourself, or discover new music through playlists. No wonder streaming accounts for almost half of all music revenue, and has more than 150 million subscribers. But the big streaming services are pop-centric. Searching for classical pieces is frustrating and anyway, little of it can really be found.



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Spirit & Bach

In the lead-up to Christmas Day, Radio 3 will be celebrating the extraordinary music of a Baroque genius with *Spirit of Bach*. Alan Davey, the controller of Radio 3, introduces our complete guide to what promises to be a thrilling season



In the week before Christmas, BBC Radio 3 will be connecting audiences with the music of JS Bach. As well as providing us with the perfect excuse to play some

glorious music, our focus Spirit of Bach will allow us to look at why his work has had such a profound effect on audiences and performers through the ages.

For me, what makes Bach special is the bright light of his harmony and his approach to counterpoint. There always appear to be many seemingly simple things going on at once to create a complex whole. Out of this musical drama and interplay between different parts comes profound musical and human truth. So the great choral pieces have tunes of exceptional beauty and collective harmony of some complexity, but they also have human drama magnified and laid bare by the musical drama. Even the solo pieces whether the cello suites, violin sonatas and partitas, or keyboard works such as the Goldberg Variations create a complex

with their use of counterpoint and inventive variation around themes. Also compelling is the way Bach takes formal 'rules' and stretches them, transcending the component parts to produce some of the finest examples of an artist opening doors of perception for his audience. This is something that only true art and artists can do.

Another thing about Bach is that, although we have his music, we know relatively little about the man himself. This may not matter

the profundity of the working of his mind and the emotions that are unleashed by his great works are portrait enough of a complex personality with great understanding of

humanity at work. Odd snippets survive, however, such as his determination to walk from Arnstadt to Lübeck as a young man to hear the organ playing of Buxtehude, which writer and broadcaster Horatio Clare will be helping us to recreate (see how he got on in the feature on p40).

I hope you can join Radio 3 this Christmas and discover the Spirit of Bach a spirit of harmony and light, complexity and insight that is unsurpassed.



RADIO 3

SPIRIT OF BACH

Schedules may be subject to alteration. For up-to-date listings see Radio Times

Friday 1 December Breakfast

6.30-9am

Radio 3's Spirit of Bach season gets underway at the start of December with 24 days of the 24 preludes and fugues from Book II of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, performed on a range of instruments every morning after the 8am news. In Bach's double-book collection of preludes and fugues, informally known as 'the 48', the composer represents, step by step, every key on the keyboard. While Book I (1722) is often regarded as being mainly for students, Book II is seen

soundworld for the listener,



as a high point of virtuosity, thanks to its fiendishly difficult technical demands on the performer. Bach completed the second book during the later part of his career (1744) when he was Thomaskantor in Leipzig. The title 'well-tempered' means 'well-tuned' and the general term 'clavier' suggests that Bach was leaving it open for the type of keyboard instrument the works could be performed on harpsichord, clavichord or organ. Many composers have been influenced by the collection, including Mozart who was introduced to the volumes in 1782, and Chopin who called The Well-Tempered Clavier his 'daily bread'. The season begins with the Prelude and Fugue No. 1 in C, BWV 870, a processional prelude that is followed by a strident three-voice fugue.

Throughout the month these works will be performed every day (from Friday 1 Dec to Sunday 24 Dec), in addition to the 'Bach before 7' slot where listeners can request their favourite work.

Saturday 2 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

The survey of works from Book II of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier continues with Prelude and Fugue No. 2 in C minor, BWV 871. The rapid prelude has been likened to Bach's earlier Two-Part Inventions, while the slow fugue is in four voices and has been arranged for organ.

Sunday 3 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

Today's Bach performance is the Prelude and Fugue No. 3 in C sharp, BWV 872. Like many of the preludes in Book II,

No. 3 uses binary dance form. Arpeggiated passages flow in the first half; developing counterpoint concludes the piece. Both the prelude and the fugue would have sounded cutting edge to contemporary ears - C sharp was an unusual key at the time.

Monday 4 December

Breakfast 6.30-9am

Bach's exquisite Prelude and Fugue No. 4 in C sharp minor, BWV 873 is full of contrasts: the prelude is cantabile, while the fugue is a dynamic display of interweaving melodies. The music is buoyant and hopeful, despite the minor key.

Tuesday 5 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

This morning's offering - Bach's Prelude and Fugue No. 5 in

D, BWV 874 - begins with a gloriously energising (and fiendishly difficult) prelude; a pensive stretto fugue follows, its use of four-part harmony akin to vocal music.

Wednesday 6 December

Breakfast 6.30-9am

The jaunty prelude of No. 6 in D minor, BWV 875 is punctuated by succinct upper melodies and richly textured lower parts. Its supporting fugue is a masterclass in counterpoint.

Thursday 7 December

Breakfast 6.30-9am

Our daily Bach prelude and fugue comes in the form of No. 7 in E flat, BWV 876. Listen out for greater exploration of the extremities of the keyboard; Bach's expansive writing is likely to have been inspired by the technical advances of the fortepiano.

Friday 8 December

Breakfast 6.30-9am

Bach's Prelude and Fugue No. 8 in D sharp minor, BWV 877 is an example of how the composer developed what began as teaching exercises into seminal works of art. Both elements of this work are hugely complex and longer than most of their sister pieces. The sparse fugue is monumental in style.

Saturday 9 December

Breakfast 6.30-9am

The exploration of Bach's preludes and fugues continues with No. 9 in E, BWV 878. Both parts are restrained, composed along more traditional lines. The fugue is notable for its stile antico (old style) approach.

Sunday 10 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

This morning's prelude and fugue is No. 10 in E minor, BWV 879. Originally intended as instructional works, several of the pieces have specific areas of study. No. 10 focuses on the right hand, with glorious voice leading in the prelude and flighty melodies in the fugue.

Monday 11 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

The Prelude and Fugue No. 11 in F, BWV 880 marks a return to Bach's classic use of polyphony; the four-part harmony of the prelude is light and airy, while the twists and turns of the



From pipes to podium

Stephen Johnson on orchestrations of Bach's organ works

Bach made plenty of transcriptions of his (and others') works for different forces. A composer can learn a lot this way - as Beethoven did when he arranged the B flat minor Fugue from Book I of The Well-Tempered Clavier for string quartet. But in the 20th century, arranging Bach's organ works for orchestra fulfilled a public function too. The demand was now for intense quasi-vocal expression, and this the organ was hard pushed to supply. Even Stravinsky (below), opponent of notions of 'expression' and 'interpretation', moaned 'the monster never breathes'. His arrangement of Bach's Canonic Variations on the chorale 'Vom Himmel hoch' pares down the warmly expressive string section and uses the winds to heighten articulation and counterpoint.

Schoenberg, meanwhile, described his large-orchestra realisation of the 'St Anne' Prelude and Fugue BWV 552 as 'audience ear-training': by picking out the development of motifs he hoped to educate listeners into the thought processes of his own music, and at the same time

'modernise' the organ's colour palette and bring out the clarity of the lines. For others, it was an opportunity to reveal what were felt to be latent Romantic possibilities in the music: drama, brilliance or nuanced subtlety of colour, and heartfelt instrumental song.

All of this can be heard in Leopold Stokowski's orchestration of the famous Toccata and Fugue in D minor for the Disney film Fantasia, and in a slightly less extrovert, more meditative manner in Elgar's arrangement of the Fantasia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 537. A

similar desire to get under the musical skin can be seen in the Bach Measures for chamber orchestra by Harrison Birtwistle (left). But perhaps even more forward-thinking is Walton's ballet The Wise Virgins, which uses some of Bach's chorale preludes. The rediscovery of the dance element in Bach is often credited to the historical performance activists, but Walton was ahead of them. Hear the BBC Philharmonic play arrangements by Reger and Elgar of Bach organ works on 20 December as part of Afternoon Concert

prelude require a deftness of touch from the performer.

Tuesday 12 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

There is a sense of pathos to Prelude and Fugue No. 12 in F minor, BWV 881: the righthand melodies of the prelude ominously bounce along before the fugue explodes, developing the repeated note motif with glorious results.

Wednesday 13 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

The next instalment of Bach's preludes and fugues is No. 13 in F sharp, BWV 882. Resplendent with ornamentation, both forms reflect popular aesthetics of the era: grace, elegance and beauty.

Thursday 14 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

We're now over halfway through Book 2, having heard a variety of Bach's compositional styles. No. 14 in F sharp minor, BWV 883, is different again, featuring an extended triple fugue.

Friday 15 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

Bach's Prelude and Fugue No. 15 in G. BWV 884, opens with a technically complex, fastmoving prelude. The concise fugue is equally demanding, requiring nimble scalic passages throughout its short duration.

Saturday 16 December

Breakfast 6.30-9am

The Prelude in No. 16 in G minor, BWV 885 draws on dotted rhythms while its fugal counterpart is a joyful dance-like development.

Sunday 17 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

The Prelude and Fugue No. 17 in A flat, BWV 886 is a key example of Bach's ability to experiment within the confines of a key structure.

European Broadcasting Union broadcast Bach concert 6pm

From the DR Concert House. Copenhagen, Denmark, as part of the EBU's Christmas music day. Bach Cantatas I-III from Christmas Oratorio, BWV 248. Christina Landshamer (soprano), Wiebke Lehmkuhl (alto), Benjamin Hulett (tenor) etc, DR Vocal Ensemble, Danish National Symphony Orchestra/ Marcus Creed

A WEEK OF BACH

In the days leading up to Christmas. Radio 3 celebrates the composer's life with a week full of his finest music

Monday 18 Monday

Breakfast 6.30-9am

Today's featured prelude and fugue is No. 18 in G sharp minor, BWV 887; the shorter prelude is tempered by a longer fugue, both of which are highly contrapuntal in style.

Essential Classics 9am-12noon

Rob Cowan explores recordings of some of Bach's greatest works, including a 'Slow Moment' at 11.30am when Rob will select a more reflective piece by the Baroque composer.

Composer of the Week 12noon-1pm

Presenter Donald Macleod will be surveying Bach's life from childhood to old age. He begins the week by focusing on the musical seeds that were sown in the composer's early life and his very first appointments as a professional musician. including Arnstadt where he famously entered a brawl in 1705 with a fellow student. Geyserbach, whom he called a 'zippelfaggotist' – a nanny-goat bassoonist. Today's Bach works are: 'Kommt, ihr Töchter, helft mir klagen', the opening chorus from St Matthew Passion. Collegium Vocale Gent/Philippe Herreweghe: Capriccio in E 'in honorem Johann Christoph Bachii Ohrdrufiensis', BWV 993. Angela Hewitt (piano); French Overture in B minor, BWV 831. Steven Devine (harpsichord); Toccata in D 'Dorian', BWV 538. Marie-Claire Alain (organ); Gott ist mein König, BWV 71. The Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists/ John Eliot Gardiner; Der Herr denket an uns, BWV 196. Concentus musicus Wien/ Nikolaus Harnoncourt

Afternoon Concert 2-5pm

From Pau Casals Hall, Barcelona. Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 1. BWV 1046: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, BWV 1048; Orchestral Suite No. 2, BWV 1067; Brandenburg Concerto No. 6, BWV 1051; Orchestral Suite No. 4. BWV 1069: Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin. Bach Violin Concerto in D minor, BWV 1052. Leonidas Kavakos (violin), Danish National Symphony Orchestra/Fabio Luisi



In Tune Bach Mixtape 7-7.30pm

Imagine what it sounded like inside the head of the elderly Bach? He'd written over 1.000 works, including hundreds of cantatas, reams of organ pieces and a series of obsessively organised suites for all the major instruments. But for a completist, the job is never finished and in his final years Bach was busy preparing his legacy. He compiled his great retrospective, the Mass in B minor and published many of his finest works. This Mixtape looks at the mind of the elderly, reflective Bach, and attempts to walk in his shoes as he reminisces about a life's work: perhaps even imagining how future musicians might reinvent his music, just as he did himself, time and time again.

Radio 3 in Concert 7.30-10pm

A repeat broadcast of Bach's St John Passion from the BBC Proms 2017 (Prom 49) which was part of this summer's Reformation Day celebrations. The broadcast features a selection of other Bach works, including chorale preludes. (The Proms audience was invited to join in with the singing of these during the concert, to reflect how the chorales might have originally been performed). Bach St John Passion; Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stund, BWV 621; Buxtehude Praeludium in F sharp minor, BuxWV 146; Bach O Lamm Gottes unschuldig, BWV 618: O Lamm Gottes unschuldig BWV 401; Christus, der uns selig macht, BWV 620; Jacob Handl Ecce quomodo moritur Justus; Bach Nun danket alle Gott, BWV 657; Johannes Cruger Nun danket alle Gott. Nicholas Mulroy (Evangelist), Matthew Brook (Jesus), Sophie Bevan (soprano), Tim Mead (countertenor), Andrew Tortise (tenor), Konstantin Wolff (bass), Dunedin Consort/ John Butt (harpsichord/director).

Tuesday 19 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

We continue our journey into Book II with Prelude and Fugue No. 19 in A, BWV 888. The prelude's apparent simplicity is partnered with the interweaving tapestry of the fugue.

Essential Classics 9am-12noon

Rob Cowan continues to explore Bach's greatest works, including the 'Slow Moment' at 11.30am



when Rob selects a reflective piece by the Baroque composer.

Composer of the Week 12noon-1pm

Tuesday's programme is about the time when Bach worked at the Court in Weimar (1708-17) for two bosses, made music in the extraordinary court chapel - known as the Himmelsburg or 'Castle of Heaven' - and ended up in prison when he attempted to leave this job.

Today's Bach works are: In Dulci Jubilo, BWV 608. Simon Preston (organ); 'So lasset uns gehen in Salem der Freuden', the final chorus from Himmelskönig, sei willkommen, BWV 182. Bach Collegium Japan/Masaaki Suzuki; Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004. Gidon Kremer (violin); Sheep May Safely Graze, BWV 208; Was mir behagt, ist nur die muntre Jagd, BWV 208. Magdalena Kožená (soprano), Musica Florea/Marek Štryncl; Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue. BWV 903. Trevor Pinnock (harpsichord).

Lunchtime Concert 1-2pm

A repeat broadcast of a Bach concert from LSO St Luke's. London. Sonata in D minor, BWV 964; Prelude and Fugue No. 19 in A, BWV 864; Prelude and Fugue No. 21 in B flat, BWV 866; Prelude and Fugue No. 24 in B minor, BWV 869: Partita No. 5 in G. BWV 829 for keyboard; French Suite No. 6 in E. BWV 817 - Sarabande. Mahan Esfahani (harpsichord).

Afternoon Concert 2-5pm

From TivoliVredenburg Utrecht. Bach Preise, Jerusalem, den Herrn, BWV 119; Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren, BWV 137; Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele, BWV 69. Miriam Feuersinger (soprano), Alex Potter (countertenor), Thomas Hobbs (tenor), Peter Kooij (bass), Netherlands Bach Society/Peter Dijkstra.

Bach Walk 7-7.30pm

As part of Spirit of Bach, writer and broadcaster Horatio Clare retraces the composer's steps when he walked 250 miles from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear organist Dietrich Buxtehude (see our feature on p40). This is Radio 3's most ambitious 'slow radio' broadcast to date - following on from previous programmes that have featured the sounds of nature interspersed with music. Listeners can expect to hear the trudging of boots, the sounds of the natural landscape and snatches of Bach's music, while Clare reflects on key aspects of Bach's eipc journey. The original trip was made in 1705 and although the exact course that Bach took is unknown, Clare follows a possible route in five individual walks. The Bach Walk is broadcast over five episodes (also see 20-22 Dec and 24 Dec). This walk is the second that Clare has embarked on for Radio 3. Earlier this year he trekked through the Welsh countryside during the Hay Literary Festival.

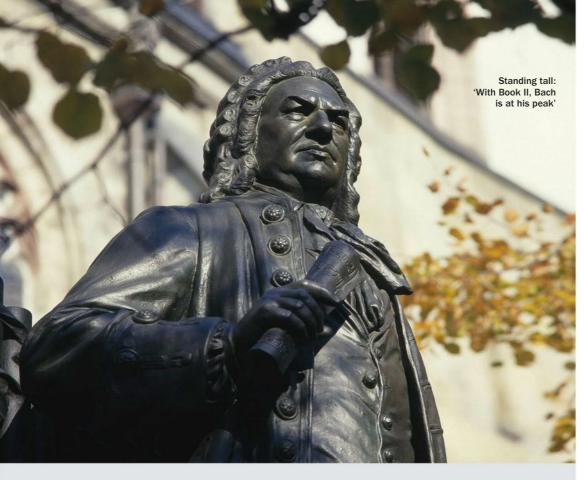
Radio 3 in Concert 7.30-10pm.

A repeat of a Lunchtime Concert from London's Wigmore Hall, in which the Italian pianist Beatrice Rana plays Bach's Goldberg Variations, BWV 988.

Wednesday 20 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

Today's prelude and fugue is No. 20 in A minor, BWV 889. The discipline displayed in the dazzling two-part invention of the prelude is mirrored in a similarly explorative fugue; both keenly anticipate the composer's later contrapuntal masterpiece, The Art of Fugue.





A keyboard odyssey

Four of today's performers reflect on the mastery of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II

Angela Hewitt pianist



Book II is on a grander scale, especially the last 12 preludes and fugues. I don't think many of those would have ended up in the first book. The most amazing thing is that he always found variety, and his inventiveness was never exhausted.

He could have written another two books. The preludes are much more elaborate in Book II, and we see the beginnings of sonata form. The fugues are sometimes a bit more orchestral in flavour, also, and the dance rhythms are very important. Perhaps he had the development of the fortepiano in mind. The dynamic contrasts you can make on a piano help bring the last 12 preludes and fugues alive.

Peter Hill pianist



It's clear that Bach saw Books I and II as companions. He was possibly motivated by the desire to give his students examples in the more upto-date *galant* style. Here you get the Bach that looks forward to Beethoven but also the archaic Bach. The fugues

in D, E flat and E major are like glorious Renaissance motets. By exploring the full spectrum of keys, Bach made possible - via Beethoven, who apparently could play the '48' from memory at 11 – the symphonic expansion of the 19th century. Also, he seems to have amused himself by doing in Book II the opposite of what's in Book I. While the first book ends with the blockbuster B minor fugue, Book II lets the curtain down on this enterprise in a soft, unassuming way.

Joanna MacGregor pianist



Perhaps Book II is more elusive than Book I. There is gracefulness, modesty and nuance in each of these preludes and fugues, and the idea of dance is more prevalent. They radiate contentment. I do find the first book more volatile, the second

more private. Both books are bound up with the idea of learning. Bach was first and foremost an educator. Throughout his life he mentored a group of talented young composers, intensely, for six hours each day. He wrote in the middle of the night, away from a keyboard. Both books demonstrate composition and keyboard techniques; they project the idea that teaching is by example, rather than verbal.

Christoph Rousset harpsichordist



Book I is made for students and it's really a book of exercises, but Book II is more about artistry, with extended preludes. Everything in Book II's writing is about perfection, including the balance and the structures. There is more virtuosity

than in Book I. Bach displays this in the G minor Fugue, for example, where you have four voices. It's a challenge in every aspect, technically and intellectually. With Book II, Bach is at his peak. It's not as well-known as the St Matthew Passion or the Mass in B minor but it's the same level of highquality composition.

Hear one prelude and fugue from Book II played by a variety of artists on Breakfast, 1-24 December

Essential Classics 9am-12noon

Rob Cowan continues to explore Bach's greatest works, including a 'Slow Moment' at 11.30am when Rob selects a reflective piece by the Baroque composer.

Composer of the Week 12noon-1pm

This programme looks at Bach's time in Cöthen, where he was appointed Kapellmeister in 1717. Today's featured Bach works are: 'Es Strahle die Sonne' from Der Himmel dacht auf Anhalts Ruhm und Glück. BWV 66a. Alexander Ferdinand Grychtolik (harpsichord), Mitteldeutsche Hofmusik; Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, BWV 1049 - Allegro. Academy of St Martin in the Fields/Neville Marriner; Concerto for Two Violins, BWV 1043. Itzhak Perlman/Pinchas Zukerman; Two-Part Inventions. András Schiff (piano).

Lunchtime Concert 1-2pm

A repeat of a Bach concert from LSO St Luke's. Sonata No. 1 in G minor, BWV 1001; Partita No. 3 in E, BWV 1006; Sonata No. 3 in C, BWV 1005. Isabelle Faust (violin).

Afternoon Concert 2-3.30pm

As part of Spirit of Bach, the BBC Philharmonic performs arrangements of Bach's organ masterpieces, broadcast live from Media City UK, Salford. The programme will include Bach (arr. Reger) O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sunde gross and Bach (arr. Elgar) Fantasia and Fugue in C minor. (See our box on Bach arrangements on p32).

A Bach Walk 7-7.30pm

Part 2. Broadcaster Horatio Clare retraces the composer's steps when he walked 250 miles from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear organist Dietrich Buxtehude (see 19 Dec for details).

Radio 3 in Concert 7.30-10pm

A repeat broadcast from the BBC Proms 2017 (Prom 25) at the Royal Albert Hall, conducted by Sir John Eliot Gardiner, as part of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Schütz Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren, SWV 41; Nicht uns, Herr, sondern deinem Namen, SWV 43: Danket dem Herren, denn er ist freundlich, SWV 45; Bach Cantata No. 79 'Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild'; Cantata No. 80 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott'. Monteverdi Choir,

English Baroque Soloists/ Sir John Eliot Gardiner.

Thursday 21 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

The charming Prelude and Fugue No. 21 in B flat, BWV 890 begins with a virtuosic prelude that scales the keyboard. A swirling fugue follows.

Essential Classics 9am-12noon

Rob Cowan continues to explore Bach's greatest works, including a 'Slow Moment' at 11.30am when Rob selects a reflective piece by the Baroque composer.

Composer of the Week 12noon-1pm

Today's programme is all about Christmas in Leipzig, where Bach lived and worked for the last 27 years of his life, composing liturgical works, including his monumental Magnficat. (The masterpiece will be broadcast in its entirety during this broadcast). The featured works are: Bach 'Christen, ätzet diesen Tag' from Cantata BWV 63. Collegium Vocale Gent/Philippe Herreweghe; Bach Magnificat, BWV 243. English Baroque Soloists, Monteverdi Choir/ John Eliot Gardiner.

Lunchtime Concert 1-2pm

A repeat of a Bach concert from LSO St Luke's. Cello Suite in C, BWV 1009, Cello Suite No. 6 in D, BWV 1012. Pieter Wispelway (cello).

A Bach Walk 7-7.30pm

Part 3. Broadcaster Horatio Clare retraces the composer's steps when he walked 250 miles from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear organist Dietrich Buxtehude (see 19 Dec).

Radio 3 in Concert 7.30-10pm

A repeat broadcast from the BBC Proms 2012 of a performance from Cadogan Hall. Harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani revives the informal atmosphere of Leipzig's coffee houses with his own arrangement of one of Bach's late masterpieces. Bach (arranged Mahan Esfahani) The Art of Fugue, BWV 1080. Academy of Ancient Music/ Mahan Esfahani.

Friday 22 December Breakfast 6.30-9am

Bach's Prelude and Fugue No. 22 in B flat minor, BWV 891 begins with a prelude in threepart counterpoint. The fugue is more chromatic and. like many of the other pieces, continues to be used extensively by composers in their study of harmony.

Essential Classics 9am-12noon

Presented by Rob Cowan. including a 'Slow Moment' at 11.30am when Rob selects a reflective piece by Bach.

Composer of the Week 12noon-1pm

Presenter Donald Macleod ends Bach week with a look at the composer's final years in Leipzig. Today's works are: Bach Ricercar a 6 from The Musical Offering, BWV 1079. Musica Antiqua Köln/ Reinhard Goebel: Bach Gamba Sonata No. 3, BWV 1029. Pablo Casals (cello), Paul Baumgartner (piano); Bach Ich habe genug, BWV 82. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), Munich Bach Orchestra/Karl Richter.

Lunchtime Concert 1-2pm

A repeat broadcast from 2007 from LSO St Luke's in London. Bach Sonata in E flat. BWV 1031 for flute and keyboard; Handel Sonata in B minor, Op. 1 for flute and continuo: Bach Sonata in A minor, BWV 1013 for solo flute-Sarabande, Kalevi Aho Solo III for flute solo - Presto; Bach Sonata in E, BWV 1035 for flute and continuo: Bach Suite No. 2 in B minor, BWV 1067 for orchestra (with solo flute) - Polonaise, Menuett and Badinerie. Sharon Bezaly (flute), London Baroque.

A Bach Walk 7-7.30pm

Part 4. Broadcaster Horatio Clare retraces the composer's steps when, in 1705, he walked 250 miles from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear the great Dutch organist Dietrich Buxtehude (see 19 Dec. plus our feature on p38).

Radio 3 in Concert 7.30-10pm

A repeat broadcast from the BBC Proms 2017 (Prom 73) featuring the eminent Bach performer András Schiff, The pianist performs Book I of the Well-Tempered Clavier (ahead of his performance of Book II at next year's BBC Proms).

Saturday 23 December Breakfast 7-9am

The penultimate prelude and fugue from Book 2 is No. 23 in B, BWV 892. It showcases

Bach's countrapuntal style and demands extreme dexterity from interpreters, particularly in the complex fugue.

Record Review - Building a Library 9am-12.15pm

Sara Mohr-Pietsch survevs available recordings of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos in Building a Library.

Music Matters 12.15-1pm

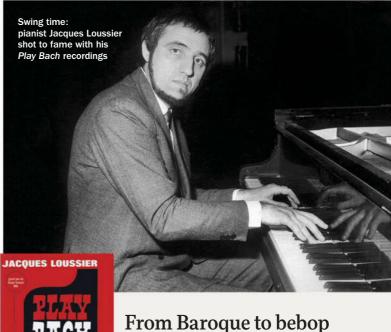
Sara Mohr-Pietsch investigates the 'spirit of Bach', discovering the many ways in which the composer's music connects with our world today.

Sound of Dance 3-4pm

Acclaimed American dancer and choreographer Mark Morris takes a personal trip with Bach as he explores how creators of dance works have responded to the master's music. (See our box on p36 on Bach's use of dance forms).

Jazz Record Requests 4-5pm

Alyn Shipton plays listener requests from a broad range of jazz, including some for Bach's music as reinvented and reinterpreted by jazz musicians. The playlist will include: Bach 'Badinerie' from Orchestral



Geoffrey Smith on Bach and jazz

An affinity between Bach and jazz should come as no surprise. Bach's continuo provides

the same function as a jazz rhythm section, with the figured bass supplying the harmonic and rhythmic impetus for the melodic flights of the upper voices. Often, the energy of those unfolding lines is enhanced by syncopation. Bach's genius for accents in unexpected places anticipated the sense of swing which is a part of the jazz essence.

Sometimes the connection has proved irresistible. While humming the introduction to Louis Armstrong's 'Mahogany Hall Stomp', the French critic Charles Delaunay found himself spontaneously propelled into the first movement of Bach's Concerto for Two Violins, BWV 1043, prompting him to organise a swing version of Bach's masterpiece with violinist Stéphane Grappelli and guitarist Django Reinhardt.

Bach's blend of energy, logic and invention inspired the innovations of bebop in the 1940s. The avant-garde pianist Lennie Tristano began his night club sets with a Bach two-part invention to prepare the audience for his own pieces, while Bach-tinged counterpoint became a trademark of such successful groups as Dave Brubeck and the Modern Jazz Quartet. In 1959, the old master truly arrived, with Jacques Loussier's series of stylish piano trio recordings, Play Bach. And in 1963, Bach-jazz crossover went vocal, with The Swingle Singers rendering the master's best-loved classics in scooby-dooing scat. Jazz Record Requests celebrates Bach and his influence on jazz on 23 Dec

Spirit of Bach

Suite No. 2 in B Minor, BWV 1067: Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565. Jacques Loussier (piano). Bach Two-Part Invention No. 1: Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh (saxophone); Bill Evans Valse (based on Bach's Siciliana in G minor. arranged for trio and symphony orchestra and conducted by Klaus Ogerman); Bach Gavotte from English Suite No. 6. Echoes of Swing; Django Reinhardt Improvisation Sur le Premier Mouvement du concerto en re mineur de JS Bach. Cvrus Chestnut Baroque Impressions (improvisation on a Bach Twopart Invention); Tim Garland Homage to Father Bach.

Sunday 24 December

As the climax of its week of Bach programmes, Radio 3 is dedicating Christmas Eve to his music

Breakfast 7-9am

Radio 3's 24 days of 24 preludes and pugues from Book II of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier concludes with No. 24 in B minor. BWV 893. What was initially conceived as a miscellany of pieces ends with a highly original couplet that demonstrates the evolution of 'The 48'.



Lord of the dance

Claire Jackson on Bach's varied use of dance forms

Although known for his adventures in counterpoint witnessed in large-scale works such as the B minor Mass, Bach was not averse to light-hearted music and dance forms, particularly the gavotte, minuet, passepied, bourée and gigue. These feature in works such as the four orchestral suites, but there are also pieces that do not bear dancespecific titles and use dance rhythms. Bach's achievement was turning these styles into profound works of art, like the Goldberg Variations.

The dance elements in Bach's music continue to inspire artists today, with recent projects spanning ballet to breakdance. During the 20th century, Bach's music was used as the basis for major ballets: choreographer George Balanchine created Concerto Barocco using the Concerto in D minor for two violins and Jerome Robbins produced shows using the Goldberg Variations and the six cello suites.

The latter was the impetus for the six-part film series *Inspired by* Bach (1998), in which cellist Yo-Yo Ma aligns different art forms to a cello suite. Suite No. 3 sees Yo-Yo Ma collaborating with choreographer Mark Morris and the cellist works with ice dancers Torville & Dean to represent No. 6. More recently, Bach has found support from an unlikely source – a street dance troupe. The Flying Steps has produced a feature-length show based on the preludes and fugues (1-12) of the Well-Tempered Clavier (Book I) where, via headspins and flips, breakers tell a coming-of-age story.

Katie Derham explores Bach and dance forms in Sound of Dance, 23 Dec

Sunday Morning 9am-12noon Celebrating Bach's organ music.

including Pastoral in F, BWV 590; In dulci jubilo, BWV 608. Simon Preston (organ).

Private Passions 12noon-1pm

Many Private Passions guests over the years have revealed their passion for Bach. But for some, the great composer has transformed their lives. The great primatologist Jane Goodall, for instance, describes how she reached such a dark time in her life that she considered giving up altogether. Four of her workers had been kidnapped in Africa from the chimpanzee sanctuary she'd established, and the money for her research had come to an end. At crisis point, she went into Paris's Notre Dame and heard Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor being played on the organ. Bach gave her hope, and transformed her vision of the world so that she could carry on. 'It helped me to understand that I was a small person in a big world. And the world was very beautiful,'

'Bach deals with death, but also with transcendence', says architect Daniel Libeskind, who reveals how Bach sustained him when he was building the 9/11 memorial in New York. The playwright Alan Bennett describes first hearing the St Matthew Passion in Leeds Parish Church when he was growing up, while fashion designer Vivienne Westwood discovered Bach's Passions only recently: 'I don't believe in God, but the beauty and the hypnotic rhythm lifts you.' And tenor Mark Padmore talks about singing The Evangelist in Bach's Passions, and how he never tires of the music - there's always something more to discover.

This compilation of favourite Bach musical moments. chosen by former guests on Private Passions, includes the following works: Bach Christmas Oratorio (presenter Michael Berkeley's own choice); Bach The Art of Fugue - brass version (chosen by Hugh Masekela, jazz trumpeter); Bach Partita No. 2 in C minor, performed by Rosalyn Tureck on harpsichord (Tanita Tikaram, pop singer); Bach Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (Jane Goodall, primatologist); Bach Cantata, BWV 161 (architect Daniel Libeskind); Bach Am Abend aber desselbigen : (director), Bart Jacobs (organ).

Sabbats, BWV 42, performed by countertenor Robin Blaze (Paterson Joseph, actor); Bach Mass in B minor - 'Gloria' (Lady Hale, judge); Bach Three-part Invention No. 5, performed by pianist Glenn Gould (Phyllida Law. actress): Bach St Matthew Passion - Chorale (chosen by Alan Bennett, writer & Vivienne Westwood, fashion designer); Bach St Matthew Passion -Erbarme Dich, performed by countertenor Michael Chance (Philippe Sands, lawyer).

The Early Music Show 2-3pm Renowned soprano Emma Kirkby introduces performances of Bach's vocal music.

Choir and Organ 4-5pm

From his early days, Bach was an organist to his core and continued to be for the rest of his life. An accomplished player, he once said 'all you have to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself'. His works, the largest amount of music written by one composer for a single instrument, are among the most challenging yet rewarding for organists. Sara Mohr-Pietsch delves into the rich seam of Bach's organ pieces – a thread which was central to his output.

The Listening Service 5-5.30pm

The Joy of Bach. Tom Service explores when and how Bach is truly joyous, uplifting and life-affirming.

Words and Music 5.30-6.45pm

A special Bach edition, featuring writings, poetry and prose by Bach's contemporaries (mixed with Bach's own music).

A Bach Walk 6.45-7.30pm

As part of the Spirit of Bach season, broadcaster Horatio Clare retraces the composer's steps when he walked 250 miles from Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear organist Dietrich Buxtehude. Today he reaches the final leg of his journey. (See p38.)

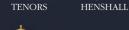
Radio 3 in Concert 7.30-9pm

A European Broadcasting Union broadcast from the Utrecht Early Music Festival (recorded in August 2017). Bach Prelude and Fugue in B minor, BWV 544; Mass in B minor Mass - Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. Vox Luminis, Lionel Meunier



KATHERINE JENKINS





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WARNER



BEATRICE RANA **GOLDBERG VARIATIONS**



ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG PETER AND THE WOLF



MARTHA ARGERICH LE CARNAVAL DES ANIMAUX



QUATUOR AROD MENDELSSOHN: QUARTETS

WARNER CLASSICS



JOHN NELSON











DOG & TRUMPET







Walking Bachwards

In 1705 JS Bach walked the 250 miles from his home in Arnstadt to Lübeck to hear the organist Buxtehude play at the Marienkirche. When Radio 3 invited Horatio Clare to retrace the composer's steps for its Spirit of Bach season, we asked him to keep a diary of the experience



First steps: Richard Andrew and Horatio Clare leave Molsdorf, just outside Arnstadt; (main) Lindsay Kemp and Clare in the Oderwald; (opposite) Kemp by a cycleway sign

Departure from Arnstadt

Wednesday 1 November

We are ghost tracking. A hunter's moon waxes in the Thuringian sky and the 300-year-old scent of JSB is still fresh here, where he spent four formative years – in his church, in his organ loft. Along the way he walked out of Arnstadt, north to Erfurt. We will be world experts on his walk and the way he was – producer Lindsay Kemp has already done it once on recce.

We discuss our hunt. In studio manager Richard Andrews's room Lindsay sips whisky from my fridge. Richard has enough cable to moor a yacht, batteries to ballast her, hairbrushes to keep the Rycote mic windshields bushy (or they don't disperse the wind, and you hear it on the mics they protect) and unlubricated condoms – BBC used to supply, but now get off the web – as waterproofs for mics. He has a polystyrene head with wires going to fluffy bits in its ears and mics taped under the severed neck. Weirdo.



He was great when we did the first 'slow radio' Sound Walk to Hay-on-Wye this summer.

I carry a digital recorder and radio mic transmitter. I wear a headset mic. I send output to Rich and Lindsay's headphones. They also hear six other tracks. Rich carries recorder on his chest and Rycote in his right hand, recording his footsteps, and other mics protruding, Rycoted, two feet above his backpack. We will have separate wildtrack, footsteps and voice. Lindsay's cut will be slog or serendipitous instinct, I think.

Day one Thursday 2 November

In balmy autumn sun we do too long, too short and just right versions of the top of the first programme in the Marktplatz in Arnstadt. We are making four half-hours and, the last, a 45-minuter for Radio 3's Christmas Eve.

August 1705: Young men, some of them musicians, loiter in a corner as Bach hurries by, heading for the church where he is musical



We are a composite: Lindsay the brain; Richer Sounds the ears: me the mouth

director. Led by one Geyersbach they rush Bach. Geyersbach strikes his face with a cudgel. Bach draws a dagger and fends him off. Geyersbach will claim holes in his clothing evidence of an attack. Clearly rubbish. Bach had called him 'a prick of a basoonist'. Sounds right.

Two months later Bach is on his way, out through the houses, along the river under the trees, to Erfurt and beyond. This stretch we think we know he walked.

His pack light, his hobnails stout, today is easy going with relatives and contacts in Erfurt if he wants them. Bet he doesn't. This was a pilgrimage. Four weeks leave. He knew he would be gone for months - screw them! He was 20. He wanted radical inspiration. He walked.

We are not wanted in Bach's church by a bustly woman. Lindsay stalls her with his Deutschlish. Rich lingers, a mobile radio station on pause. I duck off and zip to the organ loft. Bach had something here with a 'mysterious woman'



whom he may or may not have married. Climb ladder and study pipes. Find a key – modern cut of old key. Bach's key! Don't nick it. OK, nick a foot of discarded brass ending in hook, perfect for Nazi skinheads or rogue Rottweilers. Bach got laid here and was caught. Good man!

We go through woods, villages, under graffiti bridges. Walk hours across Windows screensaver, low green hills, sometimes ploughed, turbine heads turning on near horizons. See nuthatches, redwings, goldfinches in twittering charms, crows.

Day one twilight, 18km later

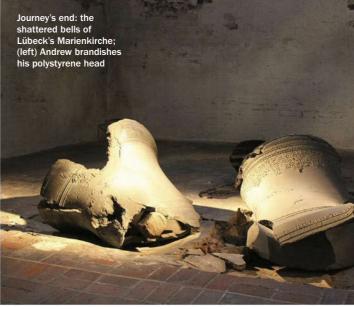
Embarrassed about blisters. Wore boots I never wear. Changed this afternoon. Damage only nascent. 'Herb soup' helps. In old centre of Erfurt, which Bach surely crossed, are lovely medieval shadows and a demo against child labour.

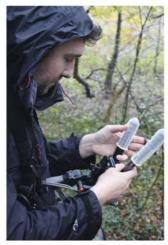
I walk ahead of Rich. He hears every burp. Lindsay floats between us, whistling when I take a wrong turn. We christen him Fiennes the Cut: he looks like Ralph Fiennes in the film *In Bruges.* Sometimes we call him Crime, partly because Crime does pay, for my expenses at least – and we think he knocks off banks. We are a composite: Lindsay the brain; 'Richer Sounds'/'Rich Rycote' the ears; me the mouth.

Day two Friday 3 November, the Autobahn, 10am

Sky clear, sun bright, Eva Black our Mercedes under the pilotage of Richer Sounds doing









Safe and sound: (top) Richard Andrew applies condoms to his mics to keep the water out; (above) the spire of Lübeck's Marienkirche disappears into the mists

a comfortable screaming 160. Penny Gore of Radio 3, friend of both drivers, is Satnav voice. They answer her back. I am in back sickly jealous. It's like being in a jet fighter on an endless runway. May run out of Germany. Country here is shallows, bowls and dishes, low heaving ridges, cultivated - brassicas, wheat, ploughed in stubble. The trees turned bare overnight, poplars like witches' brushes. Most marvellously, skeins of migrating cranes come down from the north, flying south east in long wavering v-formations.

Slight dispute at 105 miles per hour.

'This song is terrible!' Rycote exclaims, vehemently. SMs are normally laid-back. 'It's alright,' in SM means 'Yup, world-class radio.' Anything else is bad. They have two rules: 1) Treat All Mics As Live 2) Never Fade The Oueen.

'Danced to it last night!'

'I did it for the Live Lounge. Count the chords.' 'I will have to - adjudicate,' Crime grins.

Now Richard talks about children asking if he has met anvone famous.

'Obviously they wouldn't have heard of anyone on Radio 3, but we did have Taylor Swift in. Told them what I said to her, which was, "Would you mind moving your foot off that cable?"

Find Harz mountains, yomp up the first bit, knackering ourselves. Steam trains hoot through the misty valleys, sound like Giant Eagle Owls or Grosfoots. Trees marvellous, some close-packed and villainously secretive. Witch iconography everywhere – Goethe favoured Harz tourism when he set a witches' tea party in Faust on the top of Brocken. Its history stinks otherwise. Twenty thousand slave labourers lived and died in tunnels and mines making Von Braun's V2s here. Soviet troops still spied from the top in

1992. We come down in the dark in a steam train from a war film.

Recording successful; I was calmer after excited start yesterday. Lindsay happy. The best moment: emerging from the forest at the top of a pass, the summit of Brocken two kilometres off, and comprehending the Harz mountains are only clustered big ridges, Brocken the crown, three thousand feet up. Bach would have been mad to walk around them. The old paths led and still lead straight over them: we have surely found him again.

Day three Saturday 4 November

Long and wonderful downhill walk through forest reaching Wolfenbüttel, near Brunswick, at evening. Thoughts on how walking changed Bach, perhaps even made him – like the Prophet Muhammad on the camel trains, or Charles Darwin on the Beagle. The difference between men and boys.

Day four Sunday 5 November

Should have been so simple, but omens dodgy. Rich can't find his Skittles. My first cigarette tastes horrid. Soon, somehow, off marked trails in wood between railway and river we are lost in thickets and swamps, trying to fit condoms to mics in the rain and having mild hysterics when Lindsay brandishes map. We gave Germany 7/10 before but this becomes a gorgeous day, walking through hangers and rides at evening, Samuel Palmer trees under Constable skies. Horses run on cue!

Lindsay tells me to talk about the figure of the villainous itinerant musician, a stock character in German novels of the time. Bach's road companions must have been entertaining.





Day five Monday 6 November

Luminous cold morning in Lüneberg, sun scarlet on sail of weathervane boat atop Irish pub. Crime swipes croissants from breakfast again. He's still carrying a bit of Frankfurter he got for lunch two days ago. You would live here gladly: beautiful, prosperous, compact. Yesterday Richer Sounds got flashed by speed camera. This morning Crime does a red light. Pop into St Michael's, Lüneberg, where Bach was a choirboy from 1700 to 1702. Must have stopped here, Lindsay says.

'Probably went back to see the prostitute who deflowered him,' I leer.

'Probably thought he was in love with 'er,' Crime says, like Ralph Fiennes. Today is the Old Salt Road, medieval superhighway to Lübeck. Bach's route for sure. Asked for my Bach story I describe first vicious depression. Cello Suites helped. We join Elbe-Lübeck canal. All excited. We know we have terrific material. Tired.

Arrival in Lübeck Day six Tuesday 7 November

Dinner last night in old ships' captains' dining house, brigs, galliots and schooners sailing the



Come to halt before art deco bas-relief of young Bach... Emotional. wonderful moment

ceiling. Lübeck fabulous! How did I not know? Free city from 1226 to 1937. In the morning do the triumphal entry, walk to the Marienkirche where Dietrich Buxtehude was director, Bach's goal. Mist rising, freezing blue sky ghosting tops of spires. We meander into the height of the rebuilt church, the German prototype of French cathedral Gothic. It was bombed in 1942. Broken bells are still shattered into the floor. Come to halt before art deco bas-relief, young Bach with a notebook leaning on a bewigged Buxtehude who looks rastafarian. Emotional, wonderful moment. He looks up, I say. He takes off his hat, as I am. He's done it. Rich gets me to circle church again. Follows with his freaky recording head. Crime cracks up 'You processed right through the service!' he cackles. Lunch. Beer. Hurtle to airport. Now Crime's work begins. Richer will mix it. They'll win us prizes. On plane order two proseccos. We walked in Bach's footsteps, and he walked with us. I know it. @

Bach Walk is broadcast as part of Spirit of Bach from Tues 19 to Fri 22 December, 7-7.30pm, and Sun 24 December, 6.45-7.30pm. Clare's book. Icebreaker, is out on Chatto & Windus





Being famous? It's nothing. Whether I'm on stage, here in my garden or buying sugar from the local shop – it's me

THE BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE INTERVIEW

André Rieu



BBC Radio 3 and TV presenter **Clemency Burton-Hill** meets the Dutch violinist at his castle, and finds out how the son of a conductor became classical music's biggest-selling star

PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD CANNON

■ he cake, like everything about André Rieu, is larger than life. Resplendent with fat sticky gooseberries and collapsing under a mountain of whipped cream, it is proffered with a smile and an assurance that this is his 'favourite cake of all'. The 68-year-old Dutch violinist orders it from a specialist baker in Maastricht, his home town, and eats a slice, religiously, each day at 3pm. 'Without the cake,' he tells me with mock earnestness, 'I am nothing.'

If a daily dose of gooseberry cake is the secret of his success, it is surely working. Rieu is a phenomenon, no other word for it. The kitchen table at which we are eating is located in a castle dating from 1452. Legend has it that musketeer Charles d'Artagnan, inspiration for the literary hero

of the same name, enjoyed his last meal in this very room before getting it in the neck at the Siege of Maastricht. Rieu has lived here with Marjorie, his wife of 42 years, since 2000. (They have two sons and five grandchildren.) He'd visited the castle, perched atop a narrow road overlooking the River Maas, in childhood and later thought it would be nice to own it. Now he does, making adjustments as he goes. On the wintry day on which I visit, a wall is covered in scaffolding, while monasterystyle cloisters have recently been completed to elegant effect. There's a butterfly house and a pond filled with enormous koi carp.

If the notion of a modern classical musician living in a private castle among giant fish smacks of a certain fantastical grandeur, in person Rieu could hardly be more grounded or more charming. No, he laughs, he doesn't wake up every morning, look in the mirror and say 'oh there he is, the global phenomenon!' At last count he has sold around 45 million records and is not only the best-selling classical artist of all time but the biggest solo male touring artist in the world. Nonetheless, he insists, 'I'm exactly the same. Whether I'm on

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stage, here in my garden or buying sugar from the local shop it's me. Everything in life is relative. Being famous? It's nothing: it's something we have created in our head. So I'm on TV; so people on the street sometimes recognise me why should that mean I'm different? It doesn't. It would be stupid to think that just because I have sold a lot of CDs I'm better than anybody else.'

As well as the cake, there's the charisma, which is palpable the instant Rieu arrives in a room. It is impossible, too, to miss the twinkling blue eyes and hyper-expressive evebrows which, he admits, play a key role in his live shows. (When you're performing to tens of thousands of people, there are a lot of big screens transmitting huge images of your face around the arena.) 'For me, performance is all about contact with my audience. And you can connect with everyone, even 15,000 of them. I play a lot with my face, and with every eyebrow raised I feel how they react.'

I suspect Rieu's famously lustrous and animated hair might also further his communicative powers. When it comes to the pantheon of magnificent musical barnets think Rattle, Isserlis, Dudamel

he could give any of his follically-blessed colleagues a run for their money. But that may be the only instance in which Rieu is compared to such luminaries. Classical music as an industry remains suspicious of mainstream commercial success: to many purists, Rieu's breathtaking popularity in ticket sales he is bigger than Beyoncé, Bruce Springsteen, Coldplay and AC/DC

automatically invalidates any claim he might make to credibility.

Yet there is no denying the authenticity and passion with which he approaches his music-making. Son of an orchestral conductor, he had initially been introduced to the piano, which he disliked, and was aged five when his mother noticed that he had hands that might be better suited to the violin. It was love at first listen. 'The violin immediately spoke to

'I play a lot with my face, and with every eyebrow raised I feel how the crowd reacts'

me,' he says. 'The sound, up close, of my teacher's vibrato: I was flabbergasted. I wanted to have that sound.' Within three weeks he had apparently mastered his own style: to this day, a loose and luscious vibrato remains one of his trademarks. 'It always felt very instinctive,' he notes.

For all the Rieu household was musicfilled, it was staunchly Catholic and by no means idyllic. 'I had a very unhappy childhood,' he tells me frankly. 'My parents were very severe they told me off for being cheerful all the time; they told me I would come to nothing in life. My mother used to say: you must never look people in the eye, it's very rude.' He looks at me, this

walking human advertisement for eyecontact, and gives a cheeky shrug as if to say 'oh well'. Was the violin an ally against his miserable upbringing? 'The violin was part of my body, my life,' he muses. 'Exactly as it is now. But they were not proud of me, my parents. My father never encouraged me or my siblings. I think they were afraid of my happiness, my openness.'

Still, it was working under the baton of his father, whilst leading the second violins of the Maastricht Symphony Orchestra, that set him on his path. 'After a single day of being an orchestral musician, I thought: this is not my life,' he recalls. 'And I would watch these great soloists like Menuhin or David Oistrakh, and then five metres or so behind them would be "the shadow", usually the wife, and I knew: I don't want that solo life either, being alone, all "look at me". From that very first day my dream was to have my own orchestra.'

The dream turned into lavish reality. Rieu's Johann Strauss Orchestra, so-named after his musical idol, is the world's largest private ensemble. It celebrated its 30th anniversary this year with a series of spectacular concerts in Maastricht's medieval town square, attended by over 100,000 people who had come from more than 80 countries including Fiji and Australia. (Maastricht was an arduous enough trip from London's St Pancras, with multiple train and car journeys!) In contrast to orchestral musicians the world over, who often complain of being



Waltzing in Britain

What to expect from André Rieu's UK concerts this December

Plumed horses, golden carriages, celestial angels, fantastical fountains, ice rinks, an enormous sinking Titanic, fake snow, torrents of balloons... André Rieu's shows can be quite the spectacle. For a show in Melbourne, Australia, he even had a replica of Vienna's 1,441room Schönbrunn Palace built. From lighting to stagecraft, costumes to music stands, André Rieu oversees every aspect of his extravagant live events (to call them concerts would be somewhat underselling them). Despite the fact his audiences are a long way away from the stage, no detail is overlooked: champagne is real, costumes cost up to £3,000 a piece, corners remain uncut. The thousands-strong audience may not be able to tell the difference, 'but I would be able to', Rieu points out. He gives around 100 concerts per year, each involving at least four sets, in arenas and outdoor venues containing up to 40,000 fans. Each year around 600,000 people watch him live - and he's been on the Billboard Top 10 for the past decade. Celebrity admirers abound, including the actor Sir Anthony Hopkins; the two became friends when Hopkins wrote Rieu a waltz.

Rieu and his orchestra are touring the UK in December. See andrerieu.com

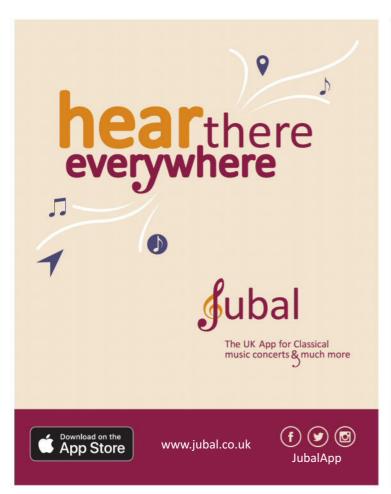


overworked, underpaid and undervalued, Rieu's musicians appear to be treated inordinately well. They're accompanied on tour by a professional chef and fitness instructor, while their buses are custommade for comfort by Mercedes-Benz. Orchestral members who are parents can benefit from the services of a private kindergarten. Rieu also owns his own recording studio, production and events company, and stage and costume atelier. In 1987 he began by convincing 12 plucky players to come with him for the ride: 'I had no money to promise them, no nothing, but they arrived at this school, which didn't have any heating, to rehearse with me'. He now has over 110 people on the fixed payroll and another 100 or so work with him on a freelance basis. 'That is a huge responsibility,' he says. 'I take it seriously. Some of them have been with me for 30 years, when they could have gone anywhere else. I'm very proud of that.'

The orchestra collaborates with him on everything not just the concert extravaganzas but the studio recordings and record-breaking cinema relays (in 2015 and 2016, broadcasts of their annual Maastricht concerts were the highest grossing cinema event of the year, raking in more than £1m in a single night). Their latest album is *Amore*, released in time for Christmas and to accompany a major UK stadium tour. As the name suggests. the disc includes romantic favourites including the iconic 'What a Wonderful World', first released 50 years ago. Rieu is relaxed when it comes to labels: he doesn't

worry whether something counts as pop or classical, folk or jazz. 'I want to tear those walls down,' he laughs. 'For me there is only good and bad music. And bad music is music without heart. Why do we play music? To touch somebody; not to show off how good we are. One of the encores we do is "Falling in Love" by Elvis. It's such a special moment, when you see the audience singing along. I am listening out all the time. Even a snatch of something I hear on the street: if a melody grabs my heart I know I must play it.'

It is perhaps this unapologetic love for the music that, above all, Rieu's devoted fans respond to especially when news headlines can make our world feel increasingly un-wonderful. Rieu is convinced by the positive impact music that can have. 'As long as there is music we can continue to hope for happiness, love and the chance of peace,' he has said. So what does 'amore' mean to him? 'It means everything. Love is everything. I am a positive man, and I can't help thinking that we are better now than we have been. that there is progress. There is a tendency to say the world is going downhill and we only talk about death and negative things. But I don't think so. We are growing, we are advancing, and music can play a huge role in human progress.' Even if the impact is measured person by person, it matters. 'People come to my concerts and they tell me they can't believe how happy they are afterwards,' he grins. 'It can take them two weeks to come back down to earth.' Rieu's new album 'Amore' is out now on Decca





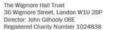
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Exclusive carol written for you!

The Owl

In 2014, we began what is now an annual tradition of commissioning a brilliant young composer to write a carol for our readers to sing. This year, Toby Young turns to a colleague for wintry inspiration



Jennifer Thorp's text perfectly captures the landscape of these winter months

aving sung pretty much every Christmas carol in existence during my time in the choir of King's College, L Cambridge, I was hugely excited to be asked to write something new for BBC Music Magazine. And as much as we all love the classic festive texts, this seemed the perfect opportunity to commission a new poem from the hugely talented writer Jennifer Thorp something that might sum up the excitement and beauty of yuletide, but in a new and unexpected way.

Jennifer didn't disappoint, with an exceptional text capturing the landscape of these winter months. In many traditional yuletide carols and poems,' she writes, 'a balance is posed between a dark, wild winter world and the intimate golden safety of human celebration. Pagan roots run deep here particularly when it comes to the passing of the year and festivals reflect that connection to darkness, with fires, feasts and revels that glow brightest through long nights. The owl, which embodies untamed wilderness and hunts under the yellow December moon, is an emblem of that delicious tie that exists between the carols sung indoors by candlelight and the bleak, beautiful midwinter beyond.'

Since my career has spanned classical, pop and folk traditions, I have tried to mix elements from all of these genres to create a musical language that really captures the magic of Jennifer's words.

Performance notes

My carol *The Owl* is all about atmosphere, $beginning\ with\ a\ cold, sparkling\ sound\ in\ verses$ 1 and 2, and gradually warming up into a more glowing colour for the chorus and third verse.

Strong dynamic contrast between the different sections will help create these moods. As with all carols, the words should be as clear as possible to give life to the direct and expressive text.

Rhythmically, this carol is full of hemiolas and cross-rhythms, which should be used to bring out the dance-like quality of certain phrases, particularly the unexpected and funky crossrhythm in the soprano's opening phrase (bar 5 and again in bar 9). In general, care should be made to make these moments of ambiguity between 6/8 and 3/4 feel as natural as possible.

At the chorus (bar 26), there should be a new injection of energy imagine the owl taking flight and soaring! with a new sense of excitement in the soprano melody, and lots of consonants to make the accented notes really explode. The accompanying ATB parts should use the dynamics to really push the music forward, using the *forte* words ('under', 'heaven', etc) to create as much drama and propulsion as you can. Be careful to save enough breath for the big crescendos in bar 31 and bar 39, to make them as majestic as they can be.

Most importantly, once the notes are learned and the geography is figured out, enjoy it. I hope it is as fun to sing as it was to write! @ We hope you'll include 'The Owl' in your carol service or concert. Do photocopy the music or download the PDF from classical-music.com and share! We'd love to hear/see your performances, so send any audio files or YouTube links to music@classicalmusic.com and we'll post them to our website and social media. To learn more about Toby Young and his collaborations with *Jennifer Thorp, visit www.theothertoby.com*

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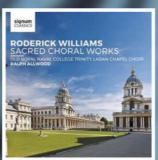
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The 12 drinks of Christmas

What music should you be playing to accompany the finest tipples? Oz Clarke and the BBC Music Magazine team offer you their expert advice

ILLUSTRATION: BILL SANDERSON

n the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me...' goes the familiar festive song. Lovely, but there are only so many times you can serve partridge and pear casserole for dinner. And have you ever tried wrapping eight milk maids? When it comes to gift ideas, we'd suggest looking elsewhere.

Such as, say, good music and wine. These old-timers of the gift list are always there for a reason offering huge variety, they can be relied upon to raise a smile. And there's all sorts of fun to be had when you start pairing the two together. What should you be uncorking to, say, Beethoven's Fifth? Or to where in your record collection should you turn when you want to enjoy a silky Châteauneuf-du-Pape in style?

As Christmas approaches, finding perfect harmony between ears and taste buds is something we at *BBC Music Magazine* have been turning our attention to with due seriousness. We, though, like to look beyond just the wine section of the drinks cabinet—all manner of drinks deserve consideration.

And who better to lead our research than Oz Clarke: TV wine expert, former Canterbury Cathedral chorister and Monteverdi Choir member? We asked Oz to recommend a drink for each of the 12 days of Christmas, complete with tasting notes. Then, equipped with bottles,

glasses, our CD library and a sense of adventure, editor Oliver Condy, deputy editor Jeremy Pound and reviews editor Rebecca Franks spent an afternoon sampling his recommendations and working out ideal musical accompaniments. Our research was as meticulous as our debates were increasingly enthusiastic. Here's what we came up with...

Christmas Day Sparkling wine Ozrecommends

Camel Valley Classic Cuvée 2014 (M&S)

Wave the flag with British bubbles on Christmas Day. We Brits don't go in for quite so much chest-thumping about Vintages of the Century as our friends over the Channel, but 2014 was a stunner here. This Cornish delight mixes the soft, nutty flavours of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir with the much more English hawthorn hedgerow and apple core bite of Seyval blanc grapes. English sparkling wine has never been better.

Rebecca suggests Stylish, sparkling, festive? This all cries out for the jubilant *Christmas Oratorio*. After all, **Bach** wrote Part One of his six-part seasonal masterpiece for Christmas Day itself in 1734. So, as you pop the cork and get the festivities underway, make sure to have 'Jauchzet, frohlocket' turned up, the zingy opening chorus gilded by trumpets and drums.







Boxing Day Ale **Oz recommends**

Mad Hatter Tzatziki Sour ale (Oddbins)

Where do they get these ideas from? This can't work, but it does. These inspired oddballs from Liverpool have brewed a sour beer in a lemony Berliner style, and then doublesoured it with Greek yoghurt, chopped up cucumber and mint leaves soaked in Ouzo. I had no idea the Germans and Greeks were getting on so well! Mayhem inside a glass, this is about the whackiest but most refreshing beer on the planet for this Christmas.

Oliver suggests Oz is quite right – there's an unmistakeable Greekness to this cloudy ale. A fresh, zingy salad in a glass, you could say, with a bit of German kick. So we've gone for the Piano Concerto No. 2 by Boris Papandopulo, a 20th-century German-born composer of Greek-Slavic heritage. The music is fizzy and exotic, its eastern influences very much in evidence in the work's bucolic third movement where a



A companionable pair: Douro Valley red and Kentish cider go very nicely with Grieg and Elgar

distinct Romantic style flirts with Macedonian and Bulgarian folk songs.

27 December Red wine

Oz recommends Waitrose Douro Valley Reserva Quinta da Rosa 2016 (Waitrose)

People often feel the necessity to have European classic reds on the table at Christmas – usually something from France, Italy or Spain. Well, here's the new classic: Douro red wine from Portugal. The Douro Valley produces sweet Port, but this dauntingly beautiful area also makes reds as serious as any in Europe, yet much more easy to love - scented with violets and lily sap, streaked with scintillating cranberry brilliance and bursting with the chewy richness of raspberries and red cherries.

Jeremy suggests Just as we were lining up the clichés about weighty opera to go with a fullbodied red, Oz takes us by surprise with a wine that is really rather perky. As you'll gather from the description, there's a lot going on here,

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so the multi-faceted charms of **Grieg**'s *Sechs Lieder* for voice and piano should prove a suitable companion, from the lively opening 'Gruss' to the open-air freshness of 'Lauf der Welt' and the introspection of 'Zur Rosenheit'.

28 December Cider

Oz recommends

Kentish Discovery Apple Cider (M&S)

Usually I'm a bit of a purist, demanding that cider be made from cider apples - and probably in the West Country. But I used to scrump apples off this farm when I was a kid! So even if Discovery is actually an eating apple, I've got to love this cider. Luckily it's a delicious, orchard-scented drink - dry, but with the fabulous juiciness of a good Kent eating apple, yet the cheesecloth savoury bite of something from much further west.

Oliver suggests One sip of this wonderful drink throws up an array of flavours, as Oz suggests. And given that cider is about as English a drink as you can get, the complexities of **Elgar**'s *Enigma Variations* seem to fit the bill, from the effervescence of the 14th variation (a portrait of the composer himself) to the charming autumnal glow of the first variation, an affectionate nod to Alice, Elgar's wife. And our cider's cheesecloth flavour? A lovely enigma all of its own...

29 December Port

Oz recommends

Taste the Difference Vintage Port (Sainsbury)

If Christmas is the only time that you drink Port (and that seems to be the case for most of us, though with winter swirling round our knees for months on end I can't see why we don't crack open a bottle of this bone-heater more often), make sure it's a good one. This is a smasher, made by the Symington family who produce labels like Warre and Graham, that is overflowing with rich, dense, dark fruit and headstrong perfume.

Oliver suggests The days between Christmas and New Year call for a few moments of reflection, and if ever there was a post-prandial composer to go with Oz's choice of port, it's **Chopin**. The piano nocturnes, particularly our choice of the C-sharp minor Op. Posth, are packed with port-y luscious harmonies and operatic melodies – this Nocturne has a touch of melancholy, too, as we leave behind the festivities and prepare to bid farewell to 2017. Perfect for a piece that's often referred to as the 'Reminiscence' Nocturne.



Biber's Passacaglia is a brilliantly intense and individual piece yet, like the white wine, has a deliciously sharp edge to it, too



Beverage report: We approach New Year and beyond with (clockwise from top) port, white wine, gazpacho and lager

30 December White wine Oz recommends Stellenrust Barrel Fermented Chenin Blanc 2016 (Sainsbury)

I was searching for a Chardonnay that wasn't too Chardonnay-ish and wasn't too oaky, but was a good, satisfying mouthfiller for winter feasts. And I fell on this – the perfect 'not quite Chardonnay' white. South Africa has been growing the Chenin Blanc grape forever, but has only recently started taking it seriously. About time. The flavours are wonderfully original - mouth-watering white peach and nectarine, squeezed with lemon, rubbed with hazelnut and smeared with cream.

Rebecca suggests Just as this wine is 'not quite chardonnay', so I've chosen something that's 'not quite Bach'. Biber's G minor Passacaglia probably influenced Bach's mighty D minor Chaconne, but somehow this magisterial ten-minute meditation for solo violin still falls into its shadows. The Passacaglia is a brilliantly individual and intense piece yet, like the wine, has a deliciously sharp edge to it, too.

New Year's Eve Lager Oz recommends Lost and Grounded Running with Sceptres lager (Oddbins)

This isn't one of your lazing by the hazy lagoon-type lagers. This is lager with oomph. Lager that you can barely see through. Lager that actually tastes of something. It's brewed in Bristol by a couple whose beer passion hurls Czech pilsner, Belgian virtually anything and Western Australian pale ale into the vat – and out comes this feisty, foaming, resinous and riotous glass of hoppy burpacious joy.

Jeremy suggests Launching the New Year's Eve celebrations in the company of this lager sounds fun. Music with a touch of whizz-bang is evidently needed here, but Handel's Music for the Royal Fireworks seems too staid and galumphy for such a characterful beverage. Instead, go for **Stravinsky**'s *Fireworks*. A brief but brilliant burst of orchestral colour, it fizzes here, there and everywhere, punctuated by the occasional crash. Happy New Year!

New Year's Day Fruit juice (plus extras...)

Oz recommends Alvalle Original Gazpacho (Sainsbury and Waitrose)

So how are you feeling? I know, gazpacho's a soup, not fruit juice. But actually, this is tomato juice on steroids. The tomato came from South America to south-west Spain.



The 12 drinks of Christmas



That's the spirit: gin, whisky and sherry find their musical match; (below) deputy editor Jeremy is put on mulled wine duty







Oz's mulled wine

- 1 bottle of decent red (M&S Vinola Tavola at £5 will do fine)
- 1/2 bottle of ruby port
- Muscovado sugar
- Cointreau
- Creme de Cassis (or Ribena)
- Chopped red chilli (or powder if you must)
- Ginger wine
- The usual spices. oranges and lemons
- 2 pints of water Heat up, but don't boil. Then drink. Repeat. It'll blow your head off in the most delicious way.

That's still where the ripest, sweetest tomatoes grow, and that's where gazpacho comes from. This gorgeous mishmash of tomato, cucumber, peppers, onion, garlic and olive oil makes for a thick but thrilling drink. Now, south-west Spain is also where dry sherry comes from. Splash some in, plus a wallop of vodka, some tabasco and Worcestershire sauce - and you have a heavenly Bloody Mary.

Oliver suggests Full and favoursome, but not overpowering that's how we like our New Year's Days. And as the magic of Oz's gazpachified Bloody Mary works on your hangover, the rich simplicity of **Arvo Pärt**'s gently hypnotic Spiegel im Spiegel will help you gear yourself, mentally and physically, for the year ahead. Ten minutes of classy serenity a music-drink match made in heaven.

2 January Mulled wine

Oz recommends Oz's own mulled wine recipe OK. You could buy a ready-made mulled wine... but, really, where's your party pride? Make your own! (For recipe, see box, left.)

Jeremy suggests Making and then drinking Oz's mulled wine (left) requires two pieces of music. For the preparation, something with a certain *joie-de-vivre* is a must as port, Cointreau, chillis and all head into the mix, Saint-Saëns's Second Piano Concerto adds to my good mood. For the consumption, I'm after something heady and luxurious and, given that chilli, with a bit of bite to it, too. After a glass or two or three, I settle on the orchestral enchantment of La tragédie de Salomé by the late-Romantic French composer Florent Schmitt.

3 January Gin

Oz recommends Taste the Difference Blackfriars London Dry Gin (Sainsbury)

There's a bit of a rule at supermarkets: never buy the cheapest spirit, but the one at a couple of quid more can be exquisite. That's definitely the case with gin. You get far more aroma, flavour – and in this case, at 43%, alcohol too. London Dry is a wonderfully appetising gin style, rooted in juniper's fascinating personality. This has a soaring scent and mouth-filling flavours and texture, and it is truly dry, as it should be.

Rebecca suggests For soaring melodies and bags of personality, look no further than **Mozart**'s exquisite comedy *Marriage of Figaro*. Even if librettist Da Ponte's wit is not as dry as the gin, Figaro is packed with humour. Plus, where would gin be without tonic? If I can push the metaphor a little further, it's when the voices blend in Mozart's ensemble numbers at the ends of Acts II and IV that the magic really happens.

4 January Sherry Oz recommends

Very Rare Dry Oloroso (M&S)

Is sherry finally making a comeback? Is this amazing, challenging, paradoxical beauty beginning to find some appreciation again? Could I even start to call sherry ever so slightly 'hip'? Well, dry sherry, yes. This Oloroso is richer than a cream sherry, and much fuller of the dark, sultry flavours of raisins and moist brown sugar and spice-laden Christmas cake. Yet it's gloriously, wilfully dry.

Rebecca suggests It sometimes pays to go for the obvious. Pairing sherry with music by one of Spain's greatest composers is a case in point. **Albéniz**'s solo piano *Iberia* is packed with influences from his home country, and its impressionist language is spiced with rhythms of the fandango, jota and flamenco. Oloroso comes from Andalusia, the capital of which is Seville. So why not savour your sherry with the third piece from *Iberia*, 'Fête-dieu a Seville'?

Twelfth Night Whisky Oz recommends

Fine Single Malt English Whisky (M&S)

I'm not sure you'll be finding too much of this whisky north of the Border, because it's English! The Scots can just about accept Irish Whiskey, but surely the Auld Enemy cannae make whisky? Yes he can, and it's stunning stuff, easily as good as a Scotch at this price and better than many. It comes from the mild countryside of East Anglia, where some of Britain's best barley is grown. And it's austere and proud as a Highlander, mildly peaty, and with a tremendous waxy malt warmth.

Jeremy suggests Twelfth Night makes me think of Shakespeare, and it's to a Bard-inspired work that I'm turning to for the final instalment of our festive guide: setting words from *The Merchant of Venice*, **Vaughan Williams**'s serene Serenade to Music matches the warm embrace of our whisky. Whether you choose the choral original or VW's later version for orchestra, this wonderful wallow of a work is music to swill around your aural tastebuds as you sit back and ponder life, the universe and everything. 'Oz & Armonico Drink Again!', Oz Clarke's new wine-and-music show with the Armonico Consort, will be coming to various venues in 2018; for details see www.armonico.org.uk



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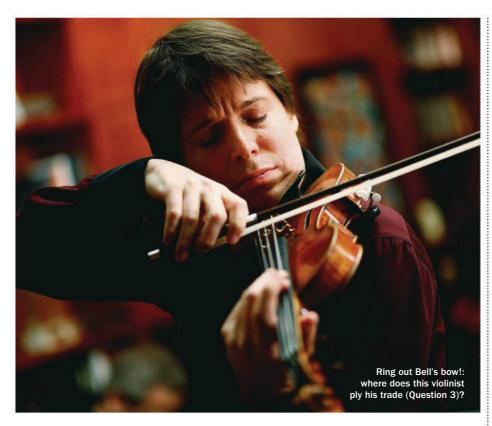


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The Christmas Quiz

'Tis the season to be jolly, they say, so why not have a little fun with our $3\bar{0}$ festive questions...?



Ding Dong! Merrily on high

- 1. Which Christmas carol contains the lines: 'There the bells are ringing *In regis* curia. O that we were there!'?
- **2.** Whose 1913 choral symphony *The* Bells has movements named 'The Silver Sleigh Bells', 'The Mellow Wedding Bells', 'The Loud Alarm Bells' and 'The Mournful Iron Bells'?
- 3. Of which London orchestra is violinist Joshua Bell (above) the music director?
- 4. Which Soviet composer's Second Symphony, written in 1944, is nicknamed 'The Bell'?
- 5. Which chimes inspired Vaughan Williams in 1914 and Vierne in 1927, but will now not be heard until 2021?

Stocking fillers

- **6.** 'How beautiful are the feet' is a soprano aria from which 1741 oratorio?
- 7. Based on the story of Cinderella, but with a bracelet playing the part of the glass slipper, whose opera La cenerentola was premiered in Rome in 1817?

8. Which French composer caused himself a fatal illness when he stabbed himself in the foot with his conducting stick?

9. What is the name of the affable cobbler (as played by American bass James Morris, right) in Wagner's opera Die Meistersinger von Nürnbera?



10. Which composer felt the force of Count Arco's foot on his behind following an argument with an archbishop in 1781?

Sing, choirs of angels

Can you name the heavenly composers pictured on the opposite page? Ouestions 11. to 14.

Dinner time

You may well find the answers (in part or in full) to the following questions on the Christmas dinner table...

15. Which work by Ravel began life in 1910 as a piano duet, was then orchestrated as a five-movement suite, and finally expanded into a ballet?

16. Which drink links a famous aria by Mozart (1787), a galop by Lumbye (1845) and a 1995 song by Oasis?

17. In which European capital city will you find the opera house called La Monnaie?



- **18.** Which composer's operas include Einstein on the Beach (1976), Akhnaten (1983) and Kepler (2009)?
- 19. Tea, coffee, marzipan, chocolate (below right) and ginger all make an appearance in the second act of which popular 1892 ballet?

Party games

These composers have got their names in a festive mix-up. Who are they?

- 20. Ben loved wine vat hug
- 21. Maniac's tinsel sale
- 22. Glad deer war
- 23. Xmas tree view palled
- **24.** Magi trip on case

Time to reminisce

25. Which muchloved English conductor received a knighthood in



the 2017 New Year's Honours but died just five months later, at the age of 74?

26. A previously unknown photograph of which composer, taken in around 1847, was discovered in Paris by a Swiss physicist in January?

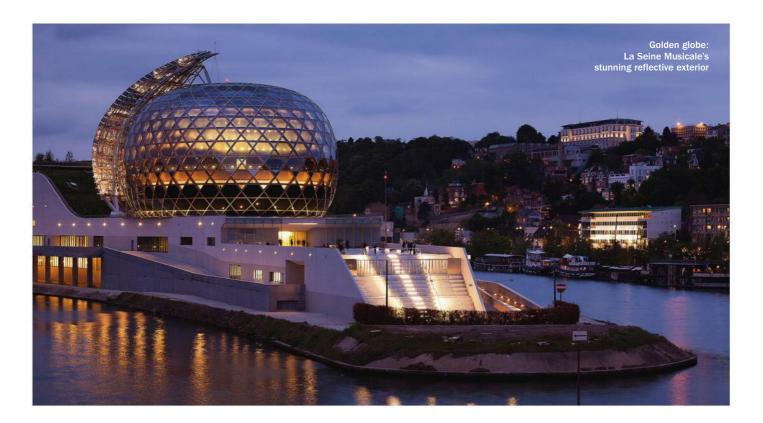
- **27.** Can you name the acclaimed Swedish tenor who died for real in January, two years after his death had been incorrectly reported on a notoriously unreliable online news service?
- 28. Why did being called to tune a piano at a Shropshire school prove to be a particularly lucrative job for Martin Backhouse in April?
- **29.** Due to high demand in tickets, which Russian pianist performed his Beethoven sonata recital twice on the same evening at Wigmore Hall on 13 June, taking just a brief break between the two concerts?
- **30.** What controversial decision by the vicar of St Sepulchre-without-Newgate church in Holborn infuriated musiclovers in August?

How did you do? See p124 for the answers.

MUSICAL DESTINATIONS

Paris France

Elinor Cooper heads to an island on the River Seine in south-west Paris, where a sparkling state-of-the art venue has opened its doors



aris's Île Seguin has had a varied life. Over the last three or four centuries alone, this island in the middle of the Seine has been home to riverside laundries, dance halls, tanneries and the largest car factory in France. And then followed 25 years of dereliction. But now it is the unlikely home of France's newest concert hall, and is at the heart of a regeneration of the industrial district in the west of the French capital.

Built by architects Shigeru Ban (famous for his cardboard disaster relief buildings) and Jean de Gastines, the striking La Seine Musicale is topped by a woven egg-like structure containing

the main auditorium. Hugged by a solarpanel 'sail' that rotates to follow the sun, the building's sides reflect its watery surroundings so that it almost seems to float on the river's surface, and a roof garden with views of the Eiffel Tower can be accessed throughout the year by the general public.

In fact, open and accessible space is at the heart of La Seine Musicale's ethos. A huge screen sits outside the front entrance it can be seen from almost two miles away. and will broadcast some concerts from within the hall, as well as broadcasts from other musical events around the world for passers-by to view free of charge. In

good weather, open entrances welcome wanderers into gently curving, light and open corridors, which contain shops, a iazz bar and windows into the rehearsal rooms of the ensemble-in-residence: Insula. The period orchestra whose name, appropriately, means 'Island' was founded in 2012, and has now made its home in this new concert building.

From her light and airy office in the heart of the building, Insula's musical director Laurence Equilbey is responsible for curating half of the programme at La Seine Musicale. 'I think it is rare for an ensemble to have this sort of opportunity,' she says. 'It's totally different from a usual



ET À LA SEINE MUSICALE

residency, where we have to fit into another artistic director's overall scheme. Here. we can do what we want!' Built with the needs of a modern-day ensemble in mind

including an artists' bar, naturally the resources provided for the ensemble are a huge boon. 'It's inspiring, every time I come into the my office or to rehearse,' says Equilbey. 'I'm in my element.'

One of Insula's first projects was a 'Mozart Maximum' weekend, during which audiences could hear Mozart and music inspired or influenced by the composer in every shape and size, from his violin sonatas performed by Amandine Bever to the Great Mass in C minor, complete with video graphics. And you didn't have to buy a ticket to be involved

in the public areas of La Seine Musicale, virtual reality headsets gave members of the public the chance to experience what it's like to sit within Insula as it performs.

Most of the concerts Insula curates will take place in the 1,150-seat auditorium (called, rather prosaically, 'L'Auditorium') which sits at the top of the building. It has

already been nicknamed 'the nest', and it's fairly obvious why. A honeycomb interior built from light oak, birch and cedar has been designed to optimise the auditorium's acoustic, and every (comfortable) seat has an uninterrupted view of the stage. 'It's very comfortable for the audience,' says Equilbey, 'and it is the perfect acoustic for orchestras and singers.'

Adjacent to L'Auditorium is 'La Grande Seine', a 6,000-capacity multi-purpose concert hall programmed by the private arm of La Seine Musicale that will host a wide variety of events from operas and ballets to pop concerts and musicals. This means that audiences for, say, Dancing on Ice or West Side Story will walk by the windows looking into the orchestral rehearsal rooms and perhaps be tempted

Open and accessible space is at the heart of La Seine Musicale's ethos

to try something a little different the next time they visit La Seine Musicale. That is certainly the hope, and Equilbey is obviously proud of the efforts the orchestra is making to open up access to classical music in this new space. 'Lots

> of people are very curious about the building, and about what's inside it,' she says. 'We've got great plans to bring them in.'

These plans encompass a special programme aimed at 17-25 year-olds (including events such as a Mozartian rave on the roof), familyfriendly concerts and digital resources for those who want to find out more. The



Laurence Equilbey La Seine Musicale's innovative conductor

Laurence Equilbey (above) may fill L'Auditorium at La Seine Musicale with the period-instrument sounds of her orchestra, Insula, but her interests stretch far beyond historically informed performance. After studies in Paris, London and Vienna, Equilbey founded the choir Accentus in 1991, which has gone on to win acclaim in everything ranging from the Baroque era to contemporary repertoire - its discography includes recordings by Gluck, Schubert, Rachmaninov and Pascal Dusapin. As well as Accentus and Insula, Equilbey has conducted major ensembles worldwide and, in 2008, was made a Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur.

ensemble is very passionate about finding new audiences for its period sound, but it also can't be accused of taking itself too seriously: a highlight of the orchestra's YouTube account is a performance in an airport, with Equilbey sporting a captain's uniform.

At first glance, a period ensemble whose core repertoire is around 250 years old might not seem the obvious ensemble in residence for such an ultramodern concert hall. But with their shared ethos of openness and originality, Insula and La Seine Musicale do seem the perfect fit to bring music and life back to this little island in Paris.

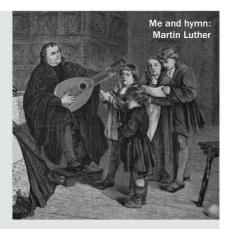
Further information: La Seine Musicale www.laseinemusicale.com Insula www.insulaorchestra.fr

Composer of the month



Composer of the Week is broadcast on Radio 3 at 12pm, Monday to Friday.

Programmes in December are: 1December Koechlin 4-8 December 21st-century opera 11-15 December Tchaikovsky 18-22 December JS Bach 25-29 December Cole Porter



Praetorius's style

Italy: Spurred on by Andrea Gabrieli's visit to Germany in 1562, the Venetian polychoral style with its separated choirs became a German go-to. It was brilliantly mastered by the largely self-taught Praetorius.

Chorale: The singing of hymns was a key feature of Luther's reforms. Their tunes were often adapted from secular sources, and with notes lengthened to produce a cantus firmus, or fragments developed in imitation, they fuel much of Praetorius's thinking.

Dance: Although Terpsichore is Praetorius's only 'formal' compilation of dance music, the rhythmic spirit of the dance is an important expressive tool in his interpreting and conveying of the meaning of sacred texts.

Sacred Concerto: Vocal-instrumental concertos underpinned by a chorale are a favoured genre in Praetorius's sacred output. Voices and instruments are grouped together into contrasting choirs, which rebound off each other and combine for opulent tuttis.

Michael Praetorius

Best known for a moment of festive perfection, the German's music was, explains Paul Riley, shaped by the Lutheran era in which he lived

ILLUSTRATION: MATT HERRING

t's surely no little irony that one of the most prolific composers of his age should be principally remembered the toe-tapping dance card of *Terpsichore* aside for a humble Christmastide chorale harmonisation of some dozen bars. Spare yet serene, its effortless nobility haunts. And an abidinglyhopeful harmonic twist applied to the penultimate cadence is as magical as the season itself. Yet for all that, Es ist ein Ros entsprungen ('A rose has sprung up') is a mere droplet in the ocean that constitutes Michael Praetorius's prodigious output a droplet that nonetheless caught

Brahms's ear at the end of his life when

school, but divinity and philosophy studies at the University of Frankfurt an der Oder suggest preparation for the family 'trade'. In the event, he didn't graduate but instead, in 1587 at the age of 16, became university organist at the Marienkirche. (It's widely assumed that he was born in 1571, but alternative dates are plausible, and 1569 might be nearer the mark if the testimony of a woodcut showing the composer as a dapper, selfassured 35 year-old is to be believed).

For some reason, he quit the post in 1590 and the trail grows cold until he resurfaced a few years later at Wolfenbüttel today home to the Jägermeister distillery,

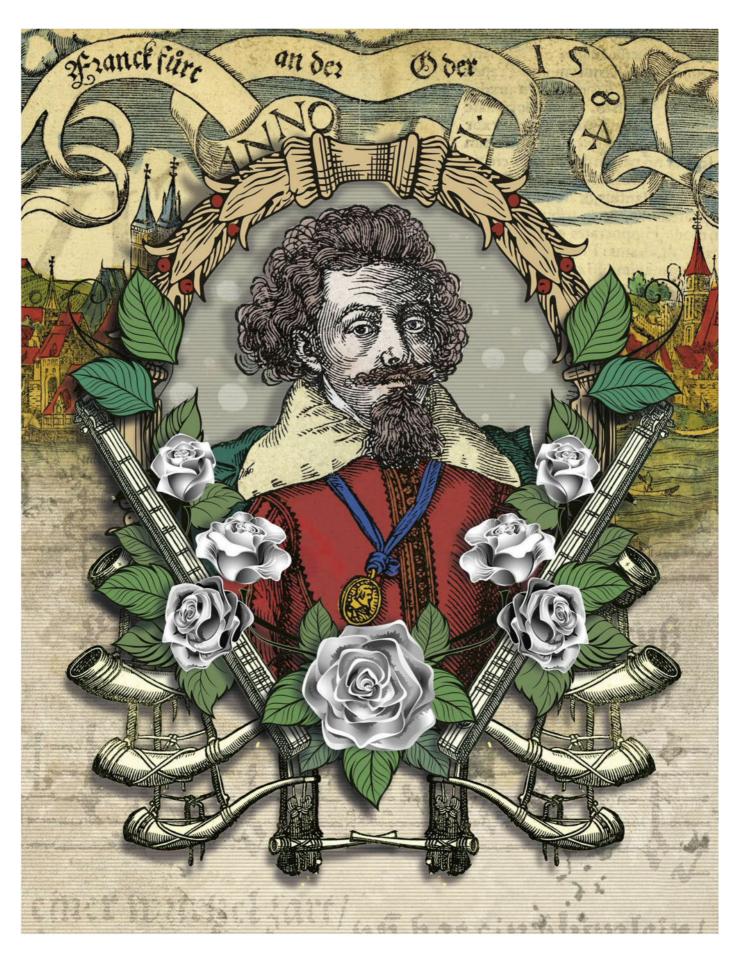
The son of a pastor, Praetorius knew at close quarters the teething pains of Protestantism

he came to compose a set of valedictory organ chorale preludes. Schoenberg fell under the spell too, wrapping it up in a delicious festive chamber miniature entrusted to harmonium, piano and strings; and it's woven through Hugo Distler's 1933 Christmas oratorio Die Weihnachtsgeschichte. Ironic, undeniably, but perhaps fitting too. For the chorale in all its manifestations is at the heart of Praetorius's work. It could hardly have been otherwise the Reformation was wired into his DNA.

Born in Creuzburg as the son of a Pastor who had studied under Luther in Wittenberg, the young Michael knew at close quarters the teething pains of Protestantism. Indeed, the family had to move more than once on account of his father's uncompromising beliefs. Praetorius picked up a little music at

then a lively centre for the arts ruled over by the cultured Duke Heinrich Julius, a playwright, leading light of the early German Baroque and a man with a nose for talent. Appointed court organist in 1595, Praetorius bided his time and in 1604 was rewarded with the Kapellmeistership, presiding over a nucleus of 15 or so musicians pretty much equally divided between singers and instrumentalists. Despite significant absences, Wolfenbüttel would be home for the rest of his life.

Not that Praetorius let the domestic grass grow under his feet. 'Have Kapellmeister, will travel' could have been the Duke's motto, and he almost certainly took Praetorius with him to Prague. Moreover, Praetorius forged links with Landgrave Moritz of Hesse in nearby Kassel, throwing open an instructive window onto a



NEW RELEASES

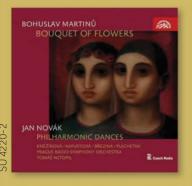


Bohuslav Martinů - The Epic of Gilgamesh Crowe / Staples / Welton / Martiník / Callow Czech Philharmonic, Manfred Honeck



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An arresting programme of Slavic music from this extraordinary children's choir, firmly established as one of the most accomplished in France, and 2017 winner of the Prix Liliane Bettencourt for choral music. It includes Stravinsky's Mass, works by Kodály, Bartók and Penderecki, and the first performance of Paweł Łukaszewski's 'Ubi caritas', commissioned by the Maîtrise for this recording.

"...beautifully blended and precisely pitched singing." Sunday Times (REGCD470)

'an utter pleasure' BBC Music (REGCD470)



EVENSONG FROM YORK MINSTER

The Choir of York Minster

directed by Robert Sharpe, Benjamin Morris (organ) Music by Howells, Smith, Vaughan Williams, Vierne, and former Directors of Music at York, Thomas Tertius Noble, Francis Jackson, and Edward Cuthbert Bairstow.

"...this remarkable choir gives the impression of complete professionalism, with every singer committed to the meaning and significance of the words and music' Organists' Review (REGCD467)



REGCD49!

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The Choir of Selwyn College, Cambridge directed by Sarah MacDonald

Ben Ponniah's music combines harmonic richness and colour reminiscent of Poulenc and early Messiaen with elements of Latin American and jazz to produce a heady mixture of sensual and exotic choral textures. This disc features a selection of recent a cappella sacred pieces, including anthems and motets, and Requiem in Blue, Ponniah's largest-scale work to date.



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Anthems and folk songs from the corners of the British Isles

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This second recording on Regent by Cantemus Chamber Choir is a collection of choral music with Celtic roots from across the UK and Ireland.

"...the choir sing with energy, clarity and an excitingly bright timbre.' Organists' Review (REGCD466)

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NAXOS OF AMERICA Inc.





topic much exercising fellow German composers: what their Italian colleagues were up to. When Heinrich Julius died in 1613 during another mission to Prague schmoozing the Hapsburgs, the Elector of Saxony pounced and lured Praetorius ('on loan') to Dresden, where the composer's impressive second-hand knowledge of Italian music could be brought bang up to date another 'loaned' acquisition was Heinrich Schütz, recently returned from studying with Giovanni Gabrieli in Venice.

Of course, Praetorius's Italianate pedigree was already long in the public domain. Shortly after becoming Kapellmeister at Wolfenbüttel he published the first of what would turn out to be nine volumes of Musae Sioniae which he completed in 1610. Over 1,200 works stand testimony to the ways in which chorale melodies might provide the underpinning for treatments that range from the grandeur of contrasting massed choirs down to the continuo-accompanied motet and unaccompanied duo. His ambition was daunting. Nothing short of furnishing music for all the contingencies of the church year would suffice. And in 1611 alone, four more volumes followed

the Eulogodia Sionia, Hymnodia Sionia, Megalynodia Sionia and Missodia Sionia amplifying the Lutheran Latin liturgy. Here, incidentally, is early evidence for the incorporation of German song verses or 'Laude' into the Latin Magnificat at Christmas and Easter, a practice still

going strong when JS Bach unveiled his Magnificat in E flat to the citizens of Leipzig on Christmas Day 1723.

And as it happens, a lavish setting of the German translation of the Magnificat crowns arguably Praetorius's greatest publication which appeared in 1619 considered by many to constitute a worthy answer to Monteverdi's collection

Vespers music. Polyhymnia caduceatrix et

of 1610 showcasing the celebrated

In the Syntagma musicum, Praetorius weighs in against the poor pay of organists

panegyrica, 'containing forty Concertos of Solemn Peace and Joy' composed for up to six choirs and comprising 'all sorts of instruments and human voices, also trumpets and kettledrums', draws exuberantly on everything he'd learned and continued to learn in Dresden. Meine Seele erhebt den Herren overflows with Italian thumbprints including a sizeable continuo contingent, arresting echo effects, elaborately embellished vocal writing and attractive instrumental ritornelli binding sections together. Little wonder, writing of one particularly grand service, the Dresden Chaplin observed

that 'the Emperor and King listened with astonished ears' to the way this 'instrument of God' marshalled his forces.

Polyhymnia caduceatrix (and its didactic companion *Polyhymnia exercitatrix*) returned composition to the centre of Praetorius's concerns after a period in which an almost forensic interest in the nature of music had taken precedence. From 1614 work progressed on his great musical encyclopaedia, the Syntagma musicum a task, he claimed, only made possible by forgoing sleep, food and drink! Three volumes made it to the printers, and the result was not only a landmark for Praetorius's contemporaries but, much later, a fertile resource as the early music revival hit its stride in the 20th century. Written in Latin, but peppered with Greek and Hebrew, Volume One is devoted to ancient music and the church, its erudition never knowingly hidden under a bushel as Turkish circumcision rites and the music of Islam come under the spotlight.

Mindful that 'makers and players are for the most part not conversant with the Latin language', Volume Two's survey of musical instruments takes pity and is written in German. The organ is particularly well served, and Praetorius weighs in against the poor remuneration of organists 'treated as more contemptible and mean than the lowest unskilled labourer'. But there's a rich seam of exotica too, with nods to the straw fiddle, the viola bastarda and the marine trumpet.

PRAETORIUS Life & Times



LIFE: Michael Praetorius is born in Creuzburg an der Werra, near Eisenach, Germany, His father, a pastor, is a strict Lutheran.

TIMES: Benvenuto Cellini, the sculptor, poet and all-round polymath whose best-known works include Perseus with the Head of Medusa, dies in Florence, aged 70.

1587

LIFE: After studying at the University of Frankfurt, he is appointed as organist at the city's church of St Marien, a post he holds for three years.

TIMES: Historia von D Johann Fausten, the anonymously authored

inspiration for Marlowe's and, later, Goethe's characters, is published for the first time by Johann Spies in Frankfurt.

Parochial

1595

LIFE: Settling in Wolfenbüttel. he enters the service of Duke Heinrich Julius of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, working as an organist.

TIMES: Ambassadors from Sweden and Russia sign the Treaty of Teusina, bringing to an end the war between the two countries that was instigated by Boris Godunov in 1590.

LIFE: He is caught in an ambush with the Duke, but distinguishes himself with a show of bravery. The Duke rewards

him with the promise of a gift of land.

TIMES: In London, the Catholic 'Gunpowder Plot' to blow up the state opening of Parliament fails when Guy Fawkes is found in the undercroft with 36 barrels of explosives.

LIFE: He dies, possibly on the day of his 50th birthday, and is buried beneath the organ in St Marien in Wolfenbüttel.

TIMES: The Dutch astronomer Willebrord Snellius derives the formula for working out the angles of refraction of light waves that will eventually be known as Snell's Law.

LIFE: Following the Duke's death, he spends a period working at the court of the Elector of Saxony in Dresden, where he meets Heinrich Schütz and becomes familiar with Italian music.

TIMES: Accused of blasphemy in his unfinished book Aurora, the mystic Jakob Böhme is denounced as a heretic.

Volume Three examines the practicalities of music-making including advice on performance practice, but Volume Four, on composition, was never completed.

His tendency toward the encyclopaedic, implicit in the rigorously organised collections of sacred music explicit in the Syntagma musicum, even extends to his one excursion into the secular sphere. *Terpsichore* is a 1612 compilation of 312 dance tune arrangements leaning heavily on material brought to Duke Heinrich Julius's Court by the French dancing master Antoine Emeraud and the violinist Pierre-Francisque Caroubel. But true to form, Praetorius was hatching a larger scheme: several volumes, each named after a Greek Muse, would probe toccatas and canzonas (Thalia), Italian and English dances (Euterpe), and German song (Erato). Only *Terpsichore* ever saw the light of day.

Polyhymnia was intended to range over 15 volumes had death not intervened in 1621

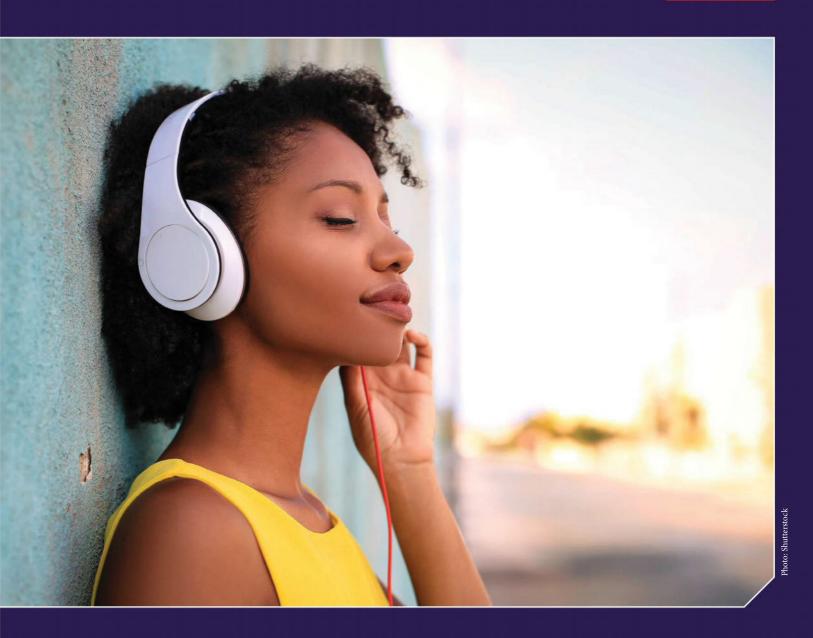
Among other unfinished projects, the late *Polyhymnia* was intended to range over 15 volumes had death not intervened in 1621. (Occasioned, suggest some, by a decade and more of conspicuous overwork). Yet in addition to a setting of Psalm 116, written 'as a farewell to myself' and published posthumously, Praetorius had one last collection up his sleeve. Championing the freshness of solo boys' voices set against larger forces, and with five numbers stylishly servicing the period from Advent to New Year, Puericinium has an eloquent simplicity that complements *Polyhymnia*'s rich complexity. This can be heard not least in the wide-eyed, bubbly setting of the Nativity-celebrating *Ouem* pastores laudavere, a joyful rejoinder to the hallowed poise of Es ist ein Ros entsprungen. Together they remind us that composer, scholar and (alongside Heinrich Schütz) unofficial guardian of the Lutheran musical conscience, Praetorius might well be a man for all seasons - but he's one for Christmas above all. 6

A Guide to Perfect Listening

Eight pages of the ultimate audio and visual equipment, from groundbreaking speakers to music streaming systems, portable DACs (digital to analogue converters) to cinematic video streaming services

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lassical music might seem an unlikely leader for an audio revolution, but remarkably, it's helped change the recording industry as much as any contemporary artist or genre. And that's almost entirely down to the pioneering efforts of independent label Chandos Records, an innovative start-up formed in 1979, which found huge success unearthing lost gems and neglected composers.

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Chandos was the first independent classical label to release Compact Discs in 1983, and made history again in 2005 when it became one of the first classical

labels to produce digital downloads, bringing multi-dimensional sound to historic symphonies, film scores and operatic masterpieces. The label's pioneering approach has met with international acclaim, as well as regular awards for audio excellence.

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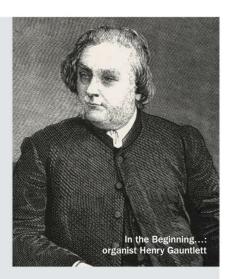




Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Various composers

Andrew Stewart explores over a century of choral history as he listens to the best recordings of this now venerable festive tradition



The composers

No two King's College Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols services are ever the same - the choice of music is entirely down to the choirmaster. The one fixture, however, is that it opens with 'Once in royal David's city'. First published in 1848, Cecil Frances Alexander's poem was given its now popular tune by one Henry Gauntlett (1805-76, pictured above) the following year. Hailing from Shropshire, Gauntlett was organist at a number of London churches. As part of his drive to improve the standard of music in sacred spaces, he wrote a vast number of hymn tunes and edited several hymn books.

Building a Library is broadcast on Radio 3 at 9.30am each Saturday as part of Record Review. A highlights podcast is available at bbc.co.uk/radio3

The work

Out of silence comes a boy's pure voice. His song, 'Once in royal David's city', transcends time, turning minds to the message of Christ's Nativity, opening hearts to the possibility of peace. The moment expands into a service of 'lessons' or readings from the King James Bible and carols ancient and modern, simple in form, profound in meaning. The combination of words and music offers an antidote to what a former Archbishop of Canterbury described as Britain's 'allergy to religion', powerful enough to draw millions those of all faiths and none to receive the annual Christmas Eve broadcast from the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, home to the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols for almost a century.

The service may be synonymous with King's but began life in Cornwall. Like so many apparently timeless English traditions, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was a Victorian invention. It was devised in 1880 by Edward White Benson, Bishop of Truro, and first observed in the temporary wooden building that served during the construction of Truro Cathedral.

Legend suggests that Benson assembled his 'Nine Lessons with Carols' after Somerset Walpole, succentor at Truro Cathedral, proposed a special Christmas Eve service, sermon-free and spiced with elevating seasonal tunes, to lure stray members of the flock from the pub. The new festal service, whatever its purpose, helped build a distinct identity for the recently created Truro diocese. What began in Cornwall flourished in Cambridge. Benson's carol service, which

followed him to Canterbury, was refreshed in December 1918 by Eric Milner-White, dean of King's College, recently returned from service on the Italian front as army chaplain and decorated combatant officer.

Milner-White's Festival evoked nostalgia for a past unmarked by the mechanised slaughter of modern warfare. 'The carol service on Christmas Eve in King's Chapel this year is taking a form new to Cambridge,' reported the Cambridge Daily News on 23 December 1918. 'It follows old custom in containing nine lessons from Genesis to the New

Order and old custom were in high demand that first Christmas after the Armistice

Testament relating the whole story of Redemption. The lessons are separated by carols of every century from the 14th onwards.' Order and old custom were in high demand that first Christmas after the Armistice. Within two years, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols drew capacity crowds to King's Chapel.

The BBC added the Cambridge service to its Christmas schedule in 1928, dropped it two years later, and began its hitherto unbroken sequence of radio broadcasts in 1931. The corporation soon had a national institution on its hands, 'widely known through broadcasting, as The Times put it at Christmas 1945. The King's service was transmitted to North America in 1938



and to parts of continental Europe the following year.

Choirmasters from Alberta to Adelaide followed the musical lead of King's organist Arthur Henry Mann, affectionately known as 'Daddy', who shaped the service's choral contents during its formative years. Boris Ord, organist at King's from 1929-57, enriched the pattern of carols old and new, while his successor, Sir David Willcocks, introduced bold arrangements of Christmas favourites. Subsequent King's organists Sir Philip Ledger and Stephen Cleobury added their own musical innovations. Within a year of Cleobury's arrival at King's in 1982, the college began commissioning new carols from composers as diverse as Harrison Birtwistle, Bob Chilcott, Roxanna Panufnik and Arvo Pärt.

Recent deconstructions of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols have exposed traces of everything from Archbishop Benson's 'muscular Christianity' to class consciousness and national myth. The King's service, suggests David Cannadine



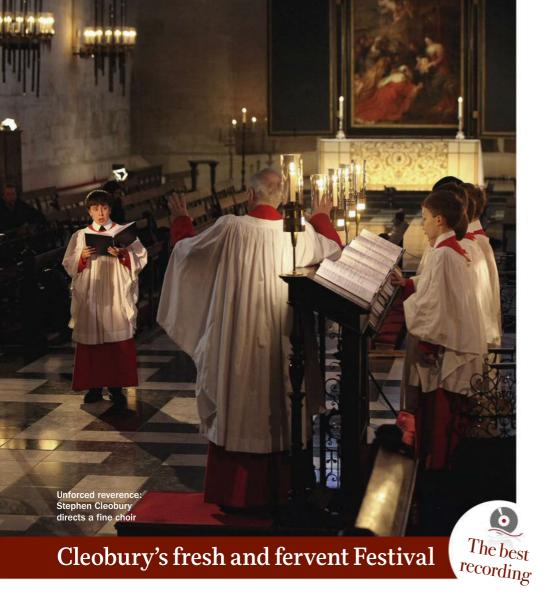
in his probing study of class in Britain, joined the annual Remembrance Day observances as post-war projections of an ordered society. It was, he says, 'a display of community-as-hierarchy, with the lessons being read in ascending order of status and seniority, from junior choirboy to the senior ecclesiastical or civic dignitary'.

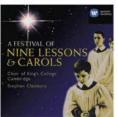
The dignity and devotion of Milner-White's service overshadow all such

partial analyses. It is what it represents in whole that communicates so directly with so many. In his semi-autobiographical *Our* Church, the philosopher Roger Scruton pokes fun at King's College, 'an atheist establishment that pays the most beautiful lip service to a God in whom its Fellows (with a few odd exceptions) do not believe.' Scruton proceeds to define the essence of its Christmas Eve service. The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols stands, he suggests, like the great fan-vaulted edifice of King's Chapel, 'as a symbol of purity in a corrupted world'.

Nothing, of course, can match the experience of tuning the radio into the King's service live on Christmas Eve or, better still, being in the chapel itself. However, various choirs have sought to recreate the magic by recording the Nine Lessons and Carols format on disc. The finest of these, we explore over the page... >

Turn the page to discover the best recording of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols





Choir of King's College, Cambridge/Stephen Cleobury (1999) Warner Classics 573 6932

'File into yellow candle light, fair choristers of King's', urges John Betjeman in Sunday Morning, King's Cambridge. The poet proceeds to evoke images of a sacred space rich in ornament, rich enough to overwhelm the senses. Much of the genius of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols lies in its balance of movement and stillness, colour and transparency, public pageant and private devotion. Sound recordings may lack the flicker of candlelight and the synaesthetic magic of

a winter sunset meeting the stained glass of King's Chapel, but they invite listeners to contemplate words and music without visual distraction.

There's a rare intensity about the atmosphere created in the first of Stephen Cleobury's three audio recordings of Nine Lessons and Carols, made in ideal

Cleobury's choir is on excellent form, hallmarked by divine sounding trebles

conditions shortly before the Christmas Eve service in December 1998 and completed the following summer. His choir is on excellent form throughout, hallmarked by divine sounding trebles, seamless tonal blend and sustained focus. It also conveys reverence for the Christmas story: something unforced, hard to fake. Cleobury, as so often, sets speeds that feel just right – listen, for instance, to Judith

Three other great recordings



Truro Cathedral Choir

This video of Truro Cathedral's 2014 Festival presents Nine Lessons and Carols as an emotionally charged act of worship. The package

includes a compelling reconstruction of Bishop Benson's original 1880 service on a companion audio disc, a fascinating 30-minute documentary about Truro's part in the Festival's creation and the carol revival, and a facsimile of Benson's first 'Festal Service for Christmas Eve'. The Choir and its music director Christopher Gray give life to a release filled with insights into the Festival's deep history. (Regent REGDVD 004)



Choir of King's College. Cambridge (2010) King's launched its own label with this release based on its

2010 Christmas Eve service. Stephen Cleobury presents repertoire from the Festival's early days alongside new arrangements and compositions, including Rautavaara's Christmas Carol. The album includes excellent programme notes, and world premiere recordings of five King's Christmas commissions including John Rutter's charming All bells in paradise. Although

Weir's *Illuminare*, *Jerusalem* or *The Fayrfax* Carol, a contemporary Christmas jewel by another King's alumnus, Thomas Adès. The traditional numbers, Ord's *Adam lay y* bounden, Pearsall's matchless arrangement of In dulci jubilo and Darke's sublime setting of In the bleak midwinter among them, receive fresh readings, all the better for being stripped of sentimental expression. The choice of music, like the words of the service, speaks of sorrow and joy, of the course from mankind's fall to Christ's incarnation and God's promise of salvation.

While the live recording of the 2008 King's Christmas Eve Festival packs

the choir's men fall short of the best of King's, there are compensations in the conviction and compassion of the readings and the recorded sound's warmth (King's College KGS 0001).



Choir of Magdalen College, Oxford Former King's Singer Bill Ives directs this

imaginative marriage of music with the

words of Eric Milner-White's service. There is a feeling here of the great anticipation of Jesus's birth and joy at the promise of salvation that it holds. Magdalen Chapel's intimate scale and exquisite choral performances. especially of Arvo Pärt's De profundis (complete with percussion), Ives's own gentle setting of Sweet was the song and Walton's deliberately archaic All this time, magnify the album's atmosphere of engaged devotion (The Gift of Music CCLCDG 1099).

And one to avoid...

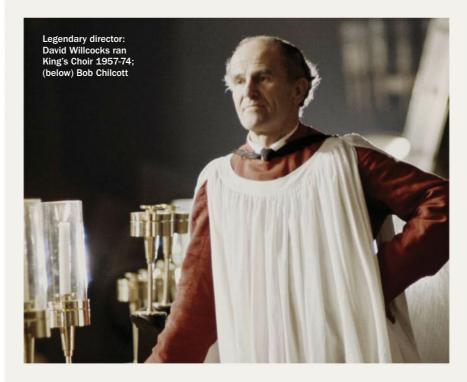


Neuer Knabenchor Hamburg

'It is fatally easy to ruin the devotion.' observed Milner-White of attempts

to revamp his service. Hamburg's Neuer Knabenchor and its director Jens Bauditz prove the point with this mix of Christmas compositions and 'fanciful stories' taken from secular German sources, read by Rufus Beck, Germany's 'voice of Harry Potter'.

more of a congregational punch in the service's set-piece hymns, the earlier 'studio' album uses the King's acoustics to amplify the fervent sound produced by those Cambridge souls involved in the community singing. The 1998-99 album projects a sound of many layers: subtle, poetic even, it allows space for the music to flourish and gives clarity to the lessons, catching the ear with those heartfelt lines from Milner-White's Bidding Prayer, calling to mind 'the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed ... and all who know not the loving kindness of the Lord'.



Continue the journey...

We suggest discs to try after the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

The King's style under

Willcocks is utterly

unmistakeable

nsurprisingly, the **Choir of** King's College, Cambridge has a fair few carols discs under its belt, stretching back several decades. Those who prefer to enjoy the music without readings in between might want to investigate Noël (Decca 444 8482), a double-disc set of recordings from the era of **David** Willcocks as music director (1957-

74). There are few surprises here - the

35 carols are largely familiar - but the recorded sound is as atmospheric as the King's style under Willcocks is

utterly unmistakeable (lots of verrrrrry rrrrrrrolled Rs...).

Heading further back in King's College history takes us to English Church Music & Favourite Christmas Carols (Testament SBT1121), a compilation of recordings made from 1949-52, when Boris Ord was the organist and choirmaster. The disc is a slightly curious beast, beginning with four well-known carols then heading into not-so-festive works by Renaissance composers such as Byrd and Taverner, but it's an interesting

glimpse of the choir before the famous Willcocks years.

Don't, though, let King's have all the fun. A little along the River Cam, the Choir of St John's College, Oxford has recorded some terrific Christmas recordings of its own under conductors including George Guest, Christopher Robinson and, presently, Andrew Nethsingha. 2011's On Christmas Night (Chandos CHSA 5096) is arguably

> the pick of the bunch, featuring a mix of carols old and very new and, in Darke's In the bleak midwinter, the

sound of tenor Julian Gregory, now a member of the King's Singers, in his undergraduate days.

Similarly deftly programmed, meanwhile, is A Wells Christmas (Resonus RES 10176), recorded last year at, as the title suggests, Wells

> Cathedral. Both the boys and girls choirs feature in a disc that leans heavily towards British composers past and present - as well as Vaughan Williams and Kenneth Leighton, there

are settings by John Rutter, Bob Chilcott (left) and the choirs' own director of music. Matthew Owens.

Reviews

110 CDs, Books & DVDs rated by expert critics

Welcome



Which recordings are you hoping to find under the Christmas tree this year? If you are looking for some inspiration, then get the mince pies out, pour yourself a

glass of sherry and turn to our Christmas round-up on p82. Our critic Terry Blain has donned his santa hat to bring you the best of this year's festive recordings. It's a selection full of surprises – just when you think there can't possibly be a new twist on a carol CD. One of my personal favourites manages both to evoke the yuletide season and introduce some genuine musical discoveries. Peter Froundijan has put together an earopening album that tours the byways of 19th and 20th-century seasonal solo piano music, stopping by to showcase Busoni, Koechlin and Ingelbrecht, among others. It's a fascinating listen. Rebecca Franks reviews editor

This month's critics

John Allison, Nicholas Anderson, Terry Blain, Kate Bolton-Porciatti, Garry Booth, Anthony Burton, Michael Church, Christopher Cook, Martin Cotton, Christopher Dingle, Misha Donat, Jessica Duchen, Rebecca Franks, Hannah French, George Hall, Malcolm Hayes, Julian Haylock, Claire Jackson, Daniel Jaffé, Stephen Johnson, Berta Joncus, Erik Levi, Natasha Loges, Max Loppert, Jon Lusk, Andrew McGregor, David Nice, Roger Nichols, Bayan Northcott, Anna Picard, Steph Power, Anthony Pryer, Paul Riley, Michael Scott Rohan, Jan Smaczny, Geoffrey Smith, Michael Tanner, Kate Wakeling, Helen Wallace

KEY TO STAR RATINGS

Outstanding Excellent Good

Disappointing Poor

RECORDING OF THE MONTH

Debussy sonatas from France's finest players

This disc of the composer's chamber music gets the anniversary celebrations off to a brilliant early start, writes Jessica Duchen



Debussy

Cello Sonata; Violin Sonata; Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp; Piano Trio; **Syrinx**

Renaud Capuçon (violin), Emmanuel Pahud (flute), Gerard Caussé (viola), Edgar Moreau (cello), Marie-Pierre Langlamet (harp), Bertrand Chamayou (piano) Erato 9029577396 65:38 mins

There'll be a lot of Debussy around in 2018, the centenary of the French composer's death. With this recording, a group of France's finest musicians gets ahead of the game to celebrate his chamber music - and by doing so prove that sometimes anniversaries can indeed be jolly good things.

It was Fauré who once said that 'music exists to lift us as far as possible above what is' – ie, to take us out of reality. But Debussy's late sonatas do just that, with exceptional purity: in these, his last compositions, he reaches a peak of abstract inventiveness that distills his language to its essence. The structures are dazzling in their originality, and supremely concise. Every note counts, with no sound too much or too little. The energy, too, is pure - neither visionary nor tragic, despite the raging of the First World War outside and Debussy's cancer within.

Beginning in 1915, he had planned six sonatas – a genre he had never espoused before - for a variety of different instruments. Mortality intervened after he had written only three: the Sonatas for Cello and Piano, for Flute, Viola and Harp, and for Violin and Piano. Terminally ill and deeply distressed by the ongoing war, he added beside his signature on the Violin Sonata's manuscript the simple words 'musicien français'.

Recording of the month Reviews







A sense of joy in collegial music-making pervades these performances. Unlike many, violinist Renaud Capuçon, pianist Bertrand Chamayou and their colleagues do not avoid the vein of sensual passion that glows beneath Debussy's perfectionism. The eloquent tone of cellist Edgar Moreau captures to a T the sometimes perplexed, sometimes ecstatic pathos of the Cello Sonata's hint at 'Pierrot faché avec la lune'.

Capuçon and Chamayou navigate the characterful whimsy of the Violin Sonata, treading a fine line between playful lightness and extrovert expression. Perhaps finest of

all is the beautiful balance of elegiac tone that shines out of the Sonata for Flute Viola and Harp, performed with deep empathy by the dream-team of flautist Emmanuel Pahud.

Debussy's late sonatas are dazzling in their originality and are supremely concise

viola player Gerard Caussé and harpist Marie-Pierre Langlamet. Pahud also plays Syrinx, providing an evocative and subtle interpretation.

The very early Piano Trio - written while the youthful Debussy was working in

Russia as a music tutor in the household of Tchaikovsky's former patron, Nadezhda von Meck – by contrast emerges from the shadow of Romanticism. Here Chamayou, Capuçon and Moreau nevertheless find the seeds of the mingled sensuality and other-worldliness Debussy later went on to perfect.

Sound quality throughout is absolutely excellent.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Hear excerpts and a discussion of this recording on the BBC Music Magazine podcast available free on iTunes or at www.classical-music.com

An interview with Renaud Capuçon



What does Debussy mean to you as a musician in France today?

Debussy is the biggest figure in French music, even though we love Fauré and Boulez. He is a very special composer. I personally feel very connected to Debussy, because my former teacher Gerard Poulet was the son of the violinist and conductor Gaston Poulet, for whom Debussy wrote the Violin Sonata. When Debussy finished his String Quartet, he asked Gaston to play it for the first time so he could listen to it. So there's a direct link - I like connections and affiliations in music. That's also why it made sense to record this CD with friends, and I thought for this Debussy project we should have French musicians.

What side of Debussy do his chamber works reveal?

He's not like Brahms or Beethoven, who both wrote a lot of chamber music. Debussy was planning to write six instrumental sonatas but in the end he only wrote three. They are typically Debussyan - with his harmonies and ways of condensing ideas. These sonatas are very short, but the amount of material he gives us in just a few minutes is quite amazing. He is very precise, and gives us a lot of information about how to play.

Why did you decide to include the early Piano Trio?

It's rarely played, and extremely rarely recorded. I discovered this piece for myself when I was 17. People told me there was no Debussy trio, but I was proud to be able to say 'yes' there was. It's quite Romantic and far away from the sonatas' spirit. Yet you can see what he was going to become. Debussy was a genius in harmony and sophistication.

Christmas choice

CHRISTMAS CHOICE



Buxtehude brimming with seasonal spirit

Terry Blain admires lustrous performances of festive rarities by Paul Hillier and colleagues



Theatre of Voices

delivers sensitive

performances

In Dulci Jubilo

Music for the Christmas season by Buxtehude and friends: JC Bach: Merk auf, mein Herz: Buxtehude: Nun komm. der heiden Heiland. BuxWV211; Fürchtet euch nicht, siehe ich verkündige euch grosse Freude, BuxWV 30, etc; C Geist: Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern;

Pastores dicite; Scheidemann: Praeambulum in

F: Praeambulum in D minor: plus

works by Reincken, Sweelinck, **Tunder & Weckmann**

Jane Gower (bassoon), Fredrik From, Jesenka Balic Zunic (violin), Judith Maria Blomsterberg (cello), Mattias

Frostenson (violone); Theatre of Voices/Paul Hillier; Allan Rasmussen (organ)

Dacapo 6.220661 77:45 mins

When it comes to Christmas music, it can sometimes seem as though we are stuck with the familiar carols and composers, and that there is nothing new to be unwrapped. Paul Hillier's new CD proves that there is. Taking Bach's predecessor Buxtehude as its focal point, Hillier's programme steers a chronological passage through the events of Christ's nativity, illustrating them with music by Buxtehude himself,

and by those in his orbit. There are many gems here, including Johann Christoph Bach's Merk auf, mein Herz, a motet for double choir; its jaunty cheerfulness infectiously captured by Hillier's singers and period instrument players. Christian Geist's brief, chirpy scena Pastores dicite quidnam vidistis is another, and is radiantly led by soprano Kate Browton, who also solos in Franz Tunder's reflective aria Ein kleines Kindelein.

A burbling fugue by Reincken and Buxtehude's solemn Nun komm der Heiden Heiland are among the organ works that punctuate the vocal items, and all are finely played by Allan Rasmussen.

The eight Theatre of Voices singers deliver unfailingly sensitive performances under Hillier's deft direction, and the recorded sound is excellent. Scholarly notes by Jakob Bloch Jespersen add further lustre to this highly desirable recital.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

> Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the BBC Music Magazine

website at www.classical-music.com

Christmas piano music

Bax, Brzezinski, Busoni, Friedman, JPE Hartmann, G Helsted, Inghelbrecht, Jolivet, Koechlin, Lyapunov, Nielsen, Palmgren and Tofft

Peter Froundjian (piano) Sony 88985380162 81:00 mins



Peter Froundjian curates an annual festival of rare piano music in Husum, Germany, and

this enterprising CD is packed with pieces that will be unfamiliar to most listeners. The quality of Froundjian's playing is evident in the delicately nuanced account of Palmgren's Snowflakes, which opens the programme.

Among the discoveries is Pastorales, a set of 12 short pieces by Koechlin, and the charming Pastourelles by Désiré-Émile Inghelbrecht. If you tend to get all carolled out over the Christmas season, this stimulating recital is the answer.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Christmas with Canterbury Cathedral Girls' Choir

O Come All Ye Faithful; O Holy Night; Hark The Herald Angels Sing; Silent Night; Away In A Manger; Carol Of The Bells; All Is Still; In The Bleak Midwinter; Heaven Responds At Bethlehem: O Little Town Of Bethlehem; White Christmas; Ding Dong Merrily On High Canterbury Cathedral Girls' Choir/ David Newsholme Decca 579 7137 46:19 mins



The Girls' Choir at Canterbury Cathedral was formed three years ago, and this CD bears strong

testimony to the high standards it is already achieving. The sound created under the choir's director David Newsholme is bright and smoothly blended, with excellent articulation and dynamic detail. Most of the pieces are familiar -Silent Night, In the Bleak Midwinter, Ding Dong Merrily On High and so forth – but the thoughtful orchestral arrangements add interest, just occasionally turning a little glitzy.

Christmas choice Reviews

The performances have a heartfelt sincerity: even O Holy Night is kept on the right side of gooey.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Sing we Yule

Folk and Medieval Song for Yuletide

Joglaresa/Belinda Svkes Joglaresa JOG007 70:05 mins



The Londonbased ensemble Joglaresa is celebrating 25 years together, playing music

which inimitably mashes together medieval, folk, African and Middle Eastern influences. Seven voices are used on this recording, including those of Joglaresa director Belinda Sykes and soprano Emma Kirkby, backed by a tangy collection of instruments including harp, dulcimer, fidel and bouzouki.

Evocative folk songs from Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland rub shoulders with more recognisable seasonal melodies, delivered in roistering fashion. There's never a dull moment, and some – the wild instrumental The Killer Rabbit, for instance – are brilliantly off kilter.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Includes works by Henry VIII, Holst, Praetorius, Tchaikovsky, Vaughan Williams, Tallis, Tye and Byrd

The Queen's Six

Resonus RES10204 72:01 mins



The Queen's Six-two countertenors, two tenors, a bass and a baritone sing as lay clerks

in the choir at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, and this is their third release as an ensemble. The disc is full of sensitively balanced, expressive performances, most of them sung unaccompanied. The Coventry Carol, Richard Madden's Balulalow and Thomas Hewitt Jones's Lullay, my liking all achieve a special intimacy with just six voices singing. A jazzed-up God rest you merry, gentlemen and a chittering Jingle Bells bring fun into the equation, too. Recommended.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Riemuitkaamme!

A Finnish Christmas: including works by Sibelius, Sonninen, Rautavaara and Madetoja; plus selections from Piae cantiones (1582)

Helsinki Chamber Choir/ Nils Schweckendiek; Jan Lehtola (organ) BIS BIS 2322 73:50 mins



Did you know that there are seasonal pieces by Sibelius, Madetoja and Sonninen that

are as popular in Finland as our favourite English-language carols are in Britain? All three composers feature on this absorbing, classily sung anthology of Finnish Christmas music. Added to the Finnish inclusions are the placid Aattoilta (Christmas Eve) by Canadian composer Matthew Whittall, and a slightly prim version of Berlioz's Shepherds' Farewell in Finnish. Most of the selections are fairly restrained in nature. Do Finns temperamentally avoid ribaldry and tinsel-draping at Christmas?

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Jesu, Joy of Man's **Desiring**

Christmas with the Dominican Sisters of Mary: traditional and new Christmas repertoire Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother

of the Eucharist

Sony 88985417412 49:00 mins



The Dominican Sisters of Mary are based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and this CD was recorded at the

order's Motherhouse chapel. It has a special atmosphere, partly created by the chapel's acoustic, partly by the bright-toned, limpid quality of the Sisters' voices.

The repertoire is mainly traditional – carols like Away in a Manger, Adeste fideles, Gabriel's Message – but the works are freshened by the vibrancy of the performances, which have an uncluttered sense of joyfulness to them, with clean, unfussy diction and fluid, unforced phrasing. The overall effect is warm, and spiritually renewing.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Joyeux Noel

French Christmas Music: works by Charpentier, Corrette, etc Aradia Ensemble/Kevin Mallon: La Fantasia/Rien Voskuilen Brilliant Classics 95569 184:00 mins (3 discs)



Lightness, charm, elegance qualities that surface repeatedly in these three CDs of

French music related to Christmas. The Charpentier disc is a special pleasure. On a recording originally made for Naxos, Kevin Mallon leads the Aradia Ensemble in deliciously nimble period instrument accounts of Charpentier's Te Deum, Dixit Dominus and Messe de Minuit. Corrette's genial Symphonies de Noel occupy disc two, while a selection of Noels (Christmas pieces for the organ) by Dandrieu, Balbastre, Boëly and others fill a third CD, played by organist Christian Lambour.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

O Holy Night

A Merton Christmas Choir of Merton College, Oxford; Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra/ Benjamin Nicholas Delphian DCD 34192 68:19 mins



There are many vibrantly energetic moments here – O Come, All Ye Faithful,

for instance, complete with brass fanfares and snare drum, and Rutter's Shepherd's Pipe Carol. In many ways, though, the best singing comes in quieter moments: Elizabeth Poston's *Jesus Christ the* apple tree, with the top line sweetly profiled by the Merton College Choir sopranos, is an obvious highlight. The thoughtful account of Patrick Hadley's I Sing of a Maiden is another. The Oxford Philharmonic accompany, occasionally oversweetening the musical textures. PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

All reviews by Terry Blain

Reissues Reviewed by Terry Blain



A Cavalier Christmas Includes works by Byrd, Jenkins, Lawes, Jeffreys and Peerson Resonus RES10202 66:28 mins What Christmas music was sung during the English

Civil War period? The York-based **Ebor Singers** answer that question in this fine anthology of works by Gibbons, Byrd, Dering, Jenkins and others. ★★★



Gjeilo Winter Songs

Decca 4816326 53:35 mins

Seasonal songs and carols, in ear-caressing, borderline schmaltzy arrangements for choir, strings and piano by the Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo. The effect is generally soothing, if cumulatively soporific. ★★★★



Thys Yool A Medieval Christmas Nimbus NI 7103 64:07 mins

Made 30 years ago, this recording from *The Martin* Best Ensemble still sounds fresh as paint. Songs and carols from the medieval period, spiced with lute, psaltery, rebec, fidel and dulcimer. Bracingly

entertaining. ★★★★



Christmas Presence Includes carols and Christmas music by Poulenc, Howells, Sweelinck and Byrd

Signum Classics SIGCD497 52:50 mins Ranging from Praetorius to Poulenc and beyond, this live performance in King's College Chapel, Cambridge catches **The King's Singers** in particularly fresh, spontaneous fettle, as their 50th anniversary approaches. ★★★★

Orchestral

ORCHESTRAL CHOICE



Vaughan Williams's icy masterpiece

Michael Scott Rohan welcomes the first complete recording of a great film score

Vaughan Williams

Scott of the Antarctic

Ilona Domnich (soprano), Christopher Nickol (organ); Women of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Chorus; Royal Scottish National Orchestra/ Martin Yates

Dutton CDLX 7340 (hybrid CD-SACD) 79:48 mins

One of my music teachers loftily pronounced that the Sinfonia Antartica was not a real symphony, but

merely film music. He would surely have been silenced by what conductor Martin Yates has uncovered here essentially a huge forgotten work on, as the notes put it, 'a quasi-symphonic canvas', which Vaughan Williams composed in full before even a frame of the film itself was shotapparently in a fervent three weeks.

Yates researched this original score and manuscript, about twice as much music as was actually used. It amounts to much, much more than the usual sequence of cues

that constitutes most film scores. They're far more integral, written as pure music, not direct illustration, although a rather sardonic ceremonial march intrudes. Some sections recall his earlier score for Coastal Command, but with added power and atmosphere, evoking the icy world with a vividness that always strikes those who know it. He was inspired not only by the script but also The Worst Journey in the

World, by Scott's colleague Apsley Cherry-Garrard. Yates conducts with appropriate majesty, his slow

tempos very close to Ernest Irving's in the film. The RSNO and chorus are in powerful form, and Ilona Domnich contributes a strikingly eerie soprano vocalise. The SACD recording is slightly drier than on Rumon Gamba's earlier, much less complete selection (Chandos) but otherwise this puts it in the shade. and is certainly the one to have - an immensely important addition to the Vaughan Williams oeuvre.

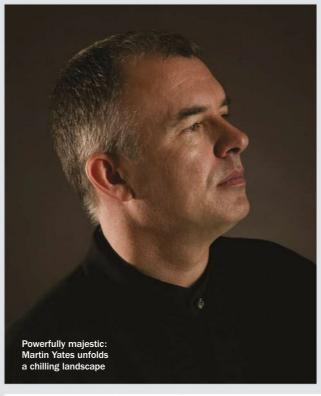
PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Scott of the Antarctic

is on a quasi-

symphonic canvas







Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the BBC Music Magazine website at www.classical-music.com

Chaminade

Callirhoë - Ballet Symphonique; Concertstück for piano and orchestra

Victor Sangiorgio (piano); BBC Concert Orchestra/Martin Yates Dutton CDLX 7339 (hvbrid CD/SACD) 77:46 mins



In 1895, The Musical Times in reviewing this Concertstück played by the composer heard

influences of Wagner, Liszt and Grieg; Lewis Foreman in the liner notes to this disc adds Dvořák and Saint-Saëns. Take your pick!

The Musical Times was on the money in continuing 'if Miss

Chaminade is not original she is certainly eclectic'. The piano part is full of the vertiginous scampering we find in so much 19th-century French piano music, to which Victor Sangiorgio does full justice; but perhaps Cécile Chaminade's main talent lay in her orchestration, which both here and in the ballet is unfailingly bright and well-balanced.

The problems lie in the substance - or what there is of it. My answer to Foreman's query as to why, after these and other orchestral works and even an opéra comique, Chaminade turned to songs and small piano pieces, would be that maybe those in authority simply weren't impressed by her more

ambitious offerings. I have to say that for me nearly 80 minutes music without a decent tune is hard going. and after half an hour or so ofher 'ballet symphonique' Callirhoë I came to the sad conclusion that her responses parallel painting by numbers: a mazurka, a sacred dance, a storm scene, a warlike dance, a pastoral scene - they all conform to a familiar pattern, and through them all runs one four-bar phrase after another.

Also in track 18 at 1:40 an entirely foreign chord briefly interrupts the discourse - left over, I would imagine, from some earlier recording. Roger Nichols

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Mahler • R Strauss

R Strauss: Also sprach Zarathustra; Mahler: Totenfeier: Symphonic Prelude for Orchestra Tobias Berndt (organ); Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra/ Vladimir Iurowski PentaTone PTC 5186 597 (hybrid CD/ SACD) 64:46 mins



I can sympathise with Vladimir Jurowski's evident desire to combat hyperinflation

in the opening of Strauss's Also sprach Zarathustra. Sometimes this spectacular musical daybreak is worked up so much that it utterly eclipses the rest of the work. The

sensitive, finely shaped, searching performance that follows on makes a good case for playing things down at the start. The trouble is, the opening now sounds perfunctory - as though Jurowski just can't wait to get to the 'real' business. Surely the Nietzsche-Strauss dawn of higher consciousness merits more reverence than this? Here Zarathustra emerges from his cave, gives the rising sun a quick thumbs-up, then heads off on his travels. The 'Dance Song' climax is similarly underwhelming. It's good to be reminded that there's more to this piece than awe-inspiring tone painting, but not if that tips the balance too far the other way.

Jurowksi is far more in control of the overall conception in Mahler's Totenfeier ('Death Rites'), the original version of the Second Symphony's funeral march first movement. It works very well as a self-standing tone poem, and the performance has such compelling conviction that occasional differences from the familiar version (orchestration, texture, a small amount of extra material) hardly matter.

What then of the Symphonic Prelude? This has been variously attributed to Bruckner, the teenage Mahler and Bruckner's pupil Rudolf Krzyzanowski. My feeling is that it probably contains Bruckner, but that a fair bit of it definitely isn't Bruckner. Could it be one of Mahler's student essays? It's possible to imagine Totenfeier emerging from this. Whoever wrote it, I doubt it's been better performed. Stephen Johnson

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Prokofiev • Saint-Saëns Prokofiev: Peter and the Wolf;

Rawsthorne: Practical Cats: Saint-Saëns: Carnival of the Animals Alexander Armstrong (narrator); Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra/Vasily Petrenko Warner Classics 9029575952 77:28 mins



It's a measure of Peter and the Wolf's brilliance that no amount oftheatrical histrionics or

'fashion' can spoil a score of such spare, enchanted perfection. Its $economy\, of\, means-both\, in\, words$ and music - give it a mirror-like quality, reflecting the changing ethos of the times. Rummaging through

the catalogue you'll find great patricians like Sir John Gielgud; the comics (Dame Edna Everage, Lenny Henry), pop stars (David Bowie better than Sting), and the honeyed, comforting pros (Richard Baker) among which Alexander Armstrong belongs. There's a palpable smile in his sonorous baritone - and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's invigorating account makes up for any lack of excitement in the reading.

It's the same story for Saint-Saëns's ever-fresh Carnival of the Animals. Armstrong seems all-too aware that Ogden Nash's mordant verses (1949) now sound groan-worthy, but the irrepressibly witty score (aided by a dynamic uncredited piano duo) triumphs.

The rarity on this disc is Rawsthorne's setting of TS Eliot's Practical Cats. A bristling overture, colourfully scored, promises much. And Armstrong's skills as singeractor come into their own in this sprechgesang recitation. Then it goes on. And on. Serving only to remind us that not all the poems were as good as Macavity. I think Andrew Lloyd Webber probably had the better idea here... Helen Wallace

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Saint-Saëns

Symphony No. 3*: Carnival of the Animals† *Daniele Rossi (organ); Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia/Antonio Pappano †(piano); Martha Argericho (piano)

Warner Classics 9029575555 61:26 mins



There's a wealth of expression to be drawn out of every note in the slow opening of Saint-Saëns's

Organ Symphony – at least as shaped by Sir Antonio Pappano, live in concert with his non-operatic orchestra in Rome.

Non-operatic? This most popular and dramatic of the French composer's symphonies here receives an intensity of treatment that would not disgrace a Leoncavallo denouement. There's something driven, almost demoniac about the first movement, progressing in great dark surges, and the Poco Adagio unfurls as a tragic aria in all but name. Pappano brings us a drama in music that undoubtedly compels and raises the

hairs at every turn. The only trouble is that it leaves one wondering whether Saint-Saëns really is being ideally served. Rather like Balzac, Saint-Saëns is a detailed observer and conveyer of drama, yet one often suspects that the heart he appears to wear on his sleeve is not actually his own. Here, the music's poise and lightness of touch, the vivacious imagination and rigorous construction, don't always come through the extremity of expression; and crucially, when the finale gets underway, it can risk becoming excessive - maybe depending on your mood while listening. Do hear it – I may be being churlish.

No such problem tethers down the Carnival of the Animals, in which Pappano takes to the piano alongside Martha Argerich, together with soloists from the orchestra. It's pure fun, and even if it is delivered with unusual heat, the high energy and glittering pianism prove irresistible. Jessica Duchen

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Scriabin

Symphony No. 2; **Piano Concerto** Kirill Gerstein (piano); Oslo Philharmonic Orch/Vasily Petrenko Lawo LWC 1139 76:35 mins



In many respects, Vasily Petrenko is the ideal interpreter for this ripe overheated music

with its strong echoes of Liszt, Wagner and Tchaikovsky. He knows instinctively how to sustain momentum, particularly in the Second Symphony's more repetitive sequential passages. He also ensures that Scriabin's propensity for unleashing constant surges in sound in the faster-paced movements does not become self-defeating, and that the biggest climaxes of all really have the greatest impact.

The Oslo Philharmonic responds with brilliantly incisive ensemble in the tricky part-writing of the second movement and negotiates all the awkward fluctuations in tempo

Reissues Reviewed by Bayan Northcott



Beethoven Symphony No. 9 Sony 88985453852 (2008) 63:55 mins Wonderfully clear textures from the compact choral and orchestral forces of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen in a compelling reading under **Paavo Järvi** combining best of 'traditional' and 'period' practices. ★★★



Haydn Symphonies Nos 100, 102 & 103 Mozart Symphonies Nos 25 & 38; Eine kleine Nachtmusik

Eloquence 480 6592 (1949-58) 128:52 mins In these 1950s releases, Georg Solti seems twominded about Haydn, indulging the slower music while fiercely overdriving the London Philharmonic in the fast. His Mozart with the LSO is more stylish and integrated. ★★★



Mozart Symphonies Nos 39, 40 & 41 Alto ALC 1339 (1963/66) 78:35 mins Where is the nervous intensity of the G minor Symphony in this literalistic 1960s account by the Berlin Philharmonic under Karl Böhm? No. 39 and the Jupiter are a bit livelier but without much individuality



Mozart Symphonies Nos 39 & 40 Berlin Classics 0300881BC (1974-75) 49:48 mins Same old-style big-orchestra Mozart and similar tempos to the Böhm: yet how much more flowing, incisive and nuanced these 1970s readings under Otmar Suitner sound - with delectable woodwind detail from the Staatskapelle Dresden. ★★★★

Orchestral Reviews

with great fluidity. I was particularly enthralled by the degree of menace projected in the fourth movement *Tempestoso*; and if the triumphalism of Finale, with its pompous marchlike transformation of the central melodic idea of the Symphony sounds empty, this is surely the composer's fault.

My only other slight caveat comes in the extended slow movement which takes some time to generate a suitably sensuous atmosphere. Perhaps the problem lies with the somewhat inexpressive flute playing at the opening which contrasts strikingly with the same instrument's magically poetic phrasing at the close.

The Piano Concerto, composed a few years earlier, is less characteristic, its harmonic language having stronger connections to Schumann and Chopin.

Nevertheless, pianist Kirill Gerstein makes the most of Scriabin's poetic writing with some particularly limpid sounds in the central Andante. As always, Petrenko proves to be the ideal concerto partner, ensuring that the dialogue between soloist and orchestra remains razor-sharp throughout. Erik Levi

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Shostakovich

Ovod (The Gadfly); The Counterplan – excerpts Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland Pfalz/Mark Fitz Gerald Naxos 8.573747 61:46 mins



Having recorded vibrant accounts of meticulously restored film scores by Shostakovich,

such as New Babylon and Alone, Mark Fitz-Gerald now reaches one of the most familiar by that composer. Usually recorded in the form of Lev Atovmian's 12-movement suite, The Gadfly (1955), illustrating a romanticised story set during Italy's Risorgimento, is here restored to the more subtle and varied colours of Shostakovich's original orchestration. One can hear more clearly the contrasts between the music of the bourgeoisie (the 'Galop', stripped of Atovmian's gaudy xylophone, sounds most effective played by strings only), the church (including the 'Dona nobis pacem' $from\,Bach's\,Mass\,in\,B\,minor-which$ replaced Shostakovich's original 'Ave



maria' cue also included in the CD), and of the people ('Bazar', named 'National Holiday' in Atovmian's suite). Several diegetic cues, such as the brief 'Folk Dance: Tarantella' for mandolin, flute and clapping, enhance the score's Italian flavour. Just as revealing, too, is having the cues in their intended sequence and in their original form: the lyrical 'Youth' and the melodramatic 'A Slap in the Face' are more effective heard as discrete pieces rather than awkwardly bolted together as in Atovmian's arrangement, 'Romance'.

The programme is rounded out with excerpts from *The Counterplan*, which includes one of Shostakovich's greatest Soviet hits. *Daniel Jaffé*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

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Vaughan Williams

A London Symphony; Sound sleep; Orpheus with his lute; Variations for Brass Band Elizabeth Watts, Mary Bevan (soprano), Kitty Whately (mezzo soprano); Royal College of Music Brass Band; BBC Symphony Orchestra/Martyn Brabbins Hyperion CDA 68190 72:25 mins



When the late Richard Hickox recorded (for Chandos) the original 1913 score of *A London*

Symphony, reinstating the substantial cuts made by Vaughan Williams before the work's publication, a comprehensive picture of his

revision process now seemed to be in place. Not so simple. There were in fact two published scores – the now familiar 1933 version, and the earlier, 1920 one recorded here, marking an intermediate stage in the Symphony's evolution. While many of the changes made between this and the final score concern fairly minor details, there are also some larger, eyebrow-raising differences.

In the 1920 version the serene polyphonic writing for strings in the first movement's introduction is mirrored by a similar, balancing passage in the finale's epilogue. Fine as this is, its omission in the final 1933 version makes the epilogue's process of dissolution more concise, and therefore more striking. The post-1920 removal of two superb linking passages in the slow movement is much harder to understand - especially the second of these, with its solo horn, cor anglais, clarinet, and mysteriously dissonant accompanying tremolo strings. Martyn Brabbins conducts the work with a sense of purposeful directness, likeably enhanced by the expressive warmth of the BBC Symphony Orchestra's response.

The supporting items in this all-Vaughan Williams programme offer interest too. There are two rarely heard early orchestral songsettings, including *Sound Sleep* with its three solo voices, and the Variations written as a test piece for the 1957 National Brass Band Championships – with rather more imaginative results. in musical

terms, than a technical brief of this kind might suggest. *Malcolm Hayes*PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

Vaughan Williams

Sinfonia Antartica; Four Last Songs; Concerto for Two Pianos Mari Eriksmoen (soprano), Roderick Williams (baritone), Louis Lortie, Hélène Mercier (piano); Bergen Philharmonic/Andrew Davis Chandos CHSA 5186 (hybrid CD/SACD) 77:47 mins



Vaughan Williams's Piano Concerto still has a daunting reputation – its percussive

chromatic runs completely overwhelmed its dedicatee Harriet Cohen. The late Joseph Cooper prepared this two-piano edition, for which the composer added extra bars and a serene closing cadenza, with a striking final fade well suited to Louis Lortie's expansive yet nuanced approach. Either he or Hélène Mercier could probably polish off the original by themselves, but their partnership develops its intensity without strain, particularly attractive in rich SACD sound. Davis is at his most dynamic, and the Bergen Philharmonic playing is characteristically crisp. This would be my present first choice, though Ashley Wass's spirited account of the original on Naxos is equally fine, too.

I was never so convinced by Davis's earlier, somewhat colourless Antartica (Warner), but this, if not definitive, is a finer animal. It begins less epically than some, but gathers scale and momentum. The Bergen players are especially effective, the huge orchestration never cluttered or opaque in SACD spaciousness. The composer rightly saw Scott, despite some misjudgements, as authentically heroic, and Davis movingly paces the last movement's classical tragedy, finally swallowed up in the uncaring ice.

Though the title Four Last Songs invites unfortunate comparisons with Richard Strauss's cycle, these are the composer's final settings of his wife Ursula's verses on the subject of love. Orchestrated by Anthony Payne, they're attractive if unexceptional, but Roderick Williams does evoke their essential tenderness. Michael Scott Rohan

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



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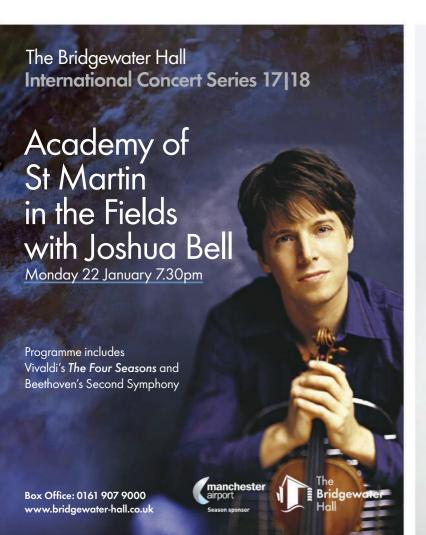
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Concerto

CONCERTO CHOICE



Argerich takes leave of Lugano in style

Michael Church admires the great pianist's immaculate and irrepressible art

Martha Argerich & Friends

Live from Lugano 2016: works by Beethoven, Ravel et al Argerich, Angelich, Babayan, Tiempo, Kovacevich et al (piano); Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana Warner 90295831653 216:42 mins (3 discs) This is the last of Warner's annual

gleanings from the Lugano Festival at which Martha Argerich presides - and definitely the most exciting. She may be 76, but her playing has lost

none of its phenomenal precision and brilliance; it's a rare pleasure to hear her playing solo in Beethoven's Choral Fantasy, which she has never before committed to disc. In every shared track she induces her 'friends' - including the excellent Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana – to raise their game to a level with hers.

In Ravel's Gaspard de la nuit Argerich is like a cat, velvet pawed until the moment for a predatory pounce. I have never heard 'Ondine' delivered with such delicate poetry, nor 'Le gibet' with such musing languor. Her 'Scarbo' starts with a monochrome rumble before the bright explosion: in her hands, this work is all about colour. As is Ravel's Piano Concerto in G, which starts in an iridescent cloud before journeying through an atmospherically jazz-inflected terrain; when she finally lets rip at top speed, it's still with immaculate articulation. Beethoven's Choral Fantasy is

> thrillingly dramatic; aided by fine soloists, Argerich gives full weight to all its moods and modes,

from the improvisational opening to the tenderly singing main theme.

With Sergei Babayan on second piano, the Mozart D major Sonata's opening Allegro emerges paradeground smart, while its Andante has exquisite poise; and in Debussy's two-piano arrangement of L'aprèsmidi d'un faune, she and her long-time partner Stephen Kovacevich find a magically silky tone.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Argerich's Beethoven

Choral Fantasy is

thrillingly dramatic







Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices 🚺 🜗 on the BBC Music Magazine website at www.classical-music.com

IS Bach

Keyboard Concertos Nos 1-5 & 7 Sonya Bach (piano); English Chamber Orchestra/John Mills

Rubicon RCD1006 103:02 mins (2 discs)



Bach's keyboard concertos are, in fact, his own recyclings for harpsichord and strings of sundry

earlier works - fine examples of how he refashioned his music according to his resources and circumstances. Had he lived a generation later, he would might have played them on the piano, as his namesake Sonya Bach does here.

The Korean pianist's approach reflects her eclectic training: first in the grand Russian school of Heinrich Neuhaus and Lazar Berman; later, with Alicia de Larrocha in Barcelona. Her style fuses these two contrasted worlds with the typically weighty Russian sound lightened by the more luminous Spanish one. Bach plays with eloquent precision and, quite apart from her immaculate technique, there are many things to enjoy here: the clean, jewel-like tone, alert articulation and stylish ornamentation. She can spin beguilingly cantabile melodies, too: the Largo of the F minor Concerto and the G minor's Andante, for instance, are exquisitely lyrical.

There are times, though, when one seems to have stepped into a Tardis, back to those meaty Bach recordings

before the period-performance revolution. Some tempos are rather deliberate, the piano's bass line can be unduly heavy, and though the English Chamber Orchestra lightens its touch for this repertoire, the full-bodied timbres of their modern instruments can clog some of the tutti passages. If you like your Bach to sound more like Mendelssohn, rich and Romantic with dynamic swells and contrasts, then these technically assured performances may well appeal. For something fleeter, lighter, more transparent, then opt for a performance on harpsichord and period instruments. Kate Bolton-Porciatti

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Beethoven • Schubert

Beethoven: Violin Concerto: Romances Nos 1 & 2: Schubert: Rondo in A James Ehnes (violin); Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra/Andrew Manze Onyx ONYX 4167 71:21 mins



'The whole gigantic scheme is serene', the early 20th-century music analyst Donald

Francis Tovey aptly remarked of Beethoven's Violin Concerto. It's as though the composer had deliberately set out to write a work almost entirely devoid of tension within the essentially dramatic form

of the concerto - much as he did for the symphony a couple of years later, with the Pastoral. It's the Violin Concerto's gently undemonstrative nature, particularly in its long first movement, that makes it difficult for the soloist to instil the music with character and contrast. The warmth and sweetness of James Ehnes's tone stand him in very good stead, and his pianissimo playing conveys an admirable sense of mystery. He's greatly helped by having a sympathetic fellow-violinist as conductor: Andrew Manze keeps a tight grip on things, never allowing the music to meander, as it sometimes can. This is essentially a traditional performance, even to the extent of using the well-worn cadenzas by Fritz Kreisler, but certainly none the worse for that.

The two Beethoven Romances, plus an Amajor Rondo Schubert probably wrote for his violinist brother Ferdinand, make substantial bonuses. Following its interesting introduction, the Schubert rather overstays its welcome, but the Beethoven pieces are deservedly popular. (The Romance No. 2 probably derives from the slow movement of a violin concerto composed in the early 1790s, the bulk of which hasn't survived.) The recording is first-rate, placing the solo violin in a realistic acoustic rather than thrusting it unnaturally into the foreground. Misha Donat

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Mathias

Piano Concertos Nos 2 & 3*; Ceremony after a Fire Raid† Llŷr Williams (piano); BBC National Orchestra of Wales/Grant Llewellyn; *William Mathias (piano); BBC Symphony Orchestra/Moshe Atzmon; †BBC National Chorus of Wales/Adrian Partington; Andrea Porter, Matt Hardy (percussion), Chris Williams (piano) Tŷ Cerdd TCRO16 69:28 mins



The remarkable listening experience here comes not just from William Mathias's music

alone, for all its enduring qualities, but from the combination of this and his own piano-playing. Fluent pianists are of course not rare in the composing world. Mathias's performance of the world premiere of his Third Concerto, recorded

at the 1968 Swansea Festival, shows that his artistry was on a totally different level from this. The electricity he generates at the keyboard is straightforwardly thrilling; it also makes similar things happen around it, with the BBC Symphony Orchestra fired up by the occasion and responding in kind. Tŷ Cerdd (aka Music Centre Wales) deserves serious credit for resurrecting a performance and recording which, until now, few listeners can have known or remembered.

The work itself assimilates its rich range of stylistic worlds with a boldness which the earlier Second Concerto doesn't quite achieve, although the connection here with Tippett's Piano Concerto, openly and admiringly acknowledged by Mathias himself, conjures some beautiful lyrical flights in the first movement particularly; Llŷr Williams and BBC NOW's live recording does excellent justice to a fine work by a then still young composer-pianist.

Written in 1973, Ceremony after a Fire Raid is a setting of Dylan Thomas's poem for mixed voices, piano and percussion. While the music's expressive world sounds less spontaneously imagined than in the two concertos, it's incisively conveyed nonetheless. And the chorus responds to some serious technical demands (the work was originally written for solo voices) with the excellence that Welsh tradition leads you to expect. Malcolm Hayes

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Mozart

Piano Concertos Nos 11-13 Marie Kuijken & Veronica Kuijken (piano); La Petite Bande Challenge Classics CC 72752 (hybrid CD/ SACD) 74:34 mins



The Kuijkens – daughters Marie and Veronica as fortepiano soloists, father Sigiswald as

first violin - offer here the three keyboard concertos completed by the 26-year-old Mozart towards the end of 1782. Since he expressly designed them to allow his soloist to be accompanied by either full orchestra or 'a quattro', ie only a string quartet, these small-scale versions are not only authentic but,



as Kuijken père argues in his booklet essay, especially rewarding in the way they highlight the extreme finesse and responsiveness of Mozart's string writing. (In the same note Kuijken explains his choice of double bass to replace a cello on the bottom line.)

In these finely gauged readings, expertly recorded to place every detail of musical interplay in a just perspective, his point certainly comes across - the more so because unlike in earlier recordings of these 'chamber' Mozart concertos, all with modern piano, the fortepiano stays exactly in balance with the period-style string articulation. Since Marie (in the F major Concerto, K413) and Veronica Kuijken (in the A and C major, K414 and 415) are both scrupulously careful musicians, a feeling of gentle, cultivated musicianship pervades the disc's 74 minutes. which anyone already familiar with its contents will appreciate.

What these performances lack, for my taste, is sufficiently fullblooded contact with the works' verve, teeming variety of incident and, above all, Mozart's unequalled mastery of structural sleight of hand to import a sense of theatre into the concert hall. Newcomers to the three concertos are therefore firmly directed to Kristian Bezuidenhout's dazzlingly theatrical accounts with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra (Harmonia Mundi). Max Loppert ***

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Violin Concerto No. 5; Adagio in E; Violin Sonata No. 32 Noa Wildschut (violin), Yoran Ish Hurwitz (piano); Netherlands Chamber Orchestra/Gordan Nikolic Warner Classics 9029582843 67:14 mins plus bonus DVD 11 mins



Here's the debut recording of a very young only 15 when this all-Mozart programme

was recorded, in October 2016 and obviously very remarkable instrumentalist. According to Warner's booklet essayist she's already 'the pre-eminent young Dutch violinist', a big claim backed up by an already striking number of international debuts and by her collaboration with such distinguished seniors as Anne-Sophie Mutter. The souvenir-ish booklet presentational style, with interviews and personal statements ('Wow, Warner, thank you so much for your faith in me!") in place of musical analysis, and nothing biographical about the other leading musicians involved, makes it clear what kind of market this is being aimed at.

And yet the CD adds up to a much more impressive Mozartian encounter than the above might lead one to expect. Its strongest feature is an unusually invigorating account of the B flat sonata, K454, full of beautifully springy violin phrases and sensitive interplay between Noa

Concerto Reviews

Wildschut and Yoram Ish-Hurwitz, the superbly alert pianist. (Only from the bonus DVD does one learn that he's in fact her uncle.)

For some tastes the Andante tempo may prove riskily slow, but everywhere their mutual responsiveness justifies the artistic choices made. A similarly potent feeling of communicative interaction between soloist and Netherlands Chamber Orchestra is evident in the concerto and K261 readings – but undermined for me by Wildschut's speciallycomposed solo cadenzas, tiresomely lengthy and out of keeping with the surrounding musical substance. Alongside my own favourite K219 recordings, by James Ehnes, Shlomo Mintz, Grumiaux, Francescatti and the very young Mutter herself, the new one will probably take a subordinate place; but the disc as a whole is one I'll be glad to replay. Max Loppert

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Saint-Saëns

Caprice and alou; Romance in C: La Muse et le Poète: Morceau de concert; Havanaise; Romance in D flat; Introduction et Rondo capriccioso

Tianwa Yang (violin), Gabriel Schwabe (cello); Malmö Symphony Orchestra/Marc Soustrot Naxos 8.573411 67:07 mins



As anyone who has encountered her Sarasate series (also for Naxos) will testify, Tianwa

Yang is a remarkable player with a scintillating technique, interpretative sensitivity and soaring tonal purity. It's ideal for Saint-Saëns, whose violin writing was greatly influenced by Sarasate.

Yang's intuitive way with the Hispanic style is evident immediately from her elegantly swung account of the Havanaise, in which the sultry opening habanera is taken at a more flowing tempo than usual and the following headlong semiquavers are thrown off with captivating deftness. She proves no less persuasive in the Introduction and Rondo capriccioso, and if Michael Rabin's tonal succulence remains uniquely beguiling (Capitol/EMI/ Warner with the Hollywood Bowl SO under Felix Slatkin), Yang's sleight-of-hand virtuosity and



ear-ringing intonation make for a thrilling experience. Yet it is in the lesser-known works where Yang really comes into her own. The chaste simplicity of her phrasing in the heart-warming Caprice and alou is matched by a silvery, effortless dexterity almost impossibly free of audible position-changes. Her narrow, almost tremulous vibrato imparts a haunting expressive intensity to the C major Romance and (most especially) La Muse et le Poète (with cellist Gabriel Schwabe), refuting utterly any sense of waning creative powers in Saint-Saëns's later years. Julian Haylock

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Chopin Evocations

Chopin: Piano Concertos Nos 1 & 2 (orch. Pletnev); Variations on Mozart's 'La ci darem la mano'; Rondo in C; Impromptu No. 4; Barber: Nocturne; Grieg: Moods, Op. 73 - 'Hommage a Chopin'; Mompou: Variations sur un thème de Chopin; Schumann: Carnaval – 'Chopin'; **Tchaikovsky**: Morceaux, Op. 72 - Un poco di Chopin Daniil Trifonov, Sergei Babayan (piano); Mahler Chamber Orchestra/ Mikhail Pletnev

DG 479 7518 140:01 mins (2 discs)



Pianist du iour Daniil Trifonov continues his commitment to keyboard heavyweights

with a bumper release inspired by Chopin, featuring both concertos, plus pieces connected to the Polish composer. Chopin's piano concertos

contain some of the genre's most expressive writing; the First is particularly expansive and poignant – attributes popular with film makers who see it as a readymade soundtrack (see, for instance, The *Truman Show*). In this work, Trifonov staves off potential sentimentality and produces – as usual – an exquisite tone. These concertos have been newly orchestrated by pianistconductor-composer Mikhail Pletney, who has focused on deeper interplay between soloist and orchestra. Although the piano part remains unaltered, the pared-back texture changes the proportion of the work, resulting in a neater, more streamlined partnership. It also shines a brighter spotlight on the piano, and, in Trifonov's own words 'liberates the soloist'. In this sense, the arrangement is perhaps closer in style to the sound that Chopin may have imagined; its lyrical, unstopping solo line now discreet from the orchestral mass. (As an aside, it would be interesting to hear this version performed on a Pleyel, Chopin's instrument of choice, compared with the ubiquitous Steinway.) Some listeners will undoubtedly miss the epic nature of the original orchestration, but Pletnev's version is a welcome - and well executed – experiment.

This recording also features pianist Sergei Babayan (Rondo for Two Pianos), who is Trifonov's mentor. By neat coincidence, Pletnev was once Babayan's teacher; there is clear musical communication between all three parties. The more unusual Chopin-related pieces

included – such as Grieg's Hommage à Chopin and Barber's Nocturne are the icing on a Bake Off-worthy cake. Claire Jackson

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Fantasia

Rautavaara: Fantasia; Szymanowski: Violin Concerto No. 1: Ravel: Tzigane Anne Akiko Meyers (violin); Philharmonia Orchestra/ Kristjan Järvi Avie AV 2385 48:11 mins



Anne Akiko Mevers commissioned Rautavaara to compose this Fantasia, and it

was one of the Finnish composer's final pieces before his death in 2016. Like many of his later works it's elegiac in character, with a strong, lush tonal base: a warm cushion of orchestral sound supporting the continuous solo line, which hardly has a rest after the first entry. Meyers plays with intensity throughout, and it's all very beautiful, but it's not always easy to find a sense of direction in the music itself, and the end could have come earlier or later, without making that much difference.

There's some lack of presence in the orchestral sound, especially in the strings, and this has an effect on the Szymanowski First Concerto, where textural detail in the intricate scoring is sometimes lost. Meyers again plays with an emotional charge, and with virtuosity in the more dynamic sections, although there could be greater variety of colour in her tone, especially where vibrato is concerned. The subtle rubato that the concerto needs often eludes Kristjan Järvi though: rather than moving fluidly between phrases, there's a sense of a series of gear changes. This ebb and flow was perfectly caught in Vasily Petrenko's conducting for Baiba Skride (on Orfeo), who also found a wider palette in the solo part.

Best recorded is the Ravel Tzigane, and Meyers attacks the opening cadenza with guts and determination. Later, some of the acrobatics are a little less assured, but Järvi is with her all the way, and this makes a good finish to a wellplanned if short CD. Martin Cotton

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Oslo Philharmonic



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"If ever a set of performances caught the weird, psychedelic world of Scriabin, it's this one." The Scotsman (LWC1088).



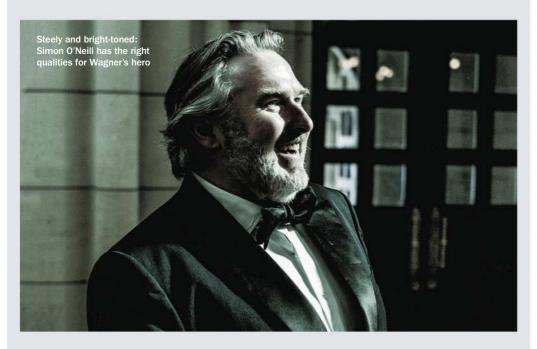


OPERA CHOICE



Simon O'Neill triumphs in Wagner's killer role

Michael Scott Rohan welcomes the latest instalment in Jaap van Zweden's 'sweeping, dramatic' Ring cycle



Jaap van Zweden

evokes Siegfried's

youthful energy

Wagner

Siegfried

Simon O'Neill, David Cangelosi, Matthias Goerne, Werner Van Mechelen, Falk Struckmann, Valentina Farcas, Deborah Humble, Heidi Melton; Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra/Jaap van Zweden Naxos 8.660413-16 241:18 mins (4 discs)

Despite a slightly tentative Das Rheingold, Naxos's Ring is becoming a serious

contender - and exceptional value, too. Jaap van Zweden still isn't the most nuanced Wagner conductor, but his sweeping, dramatic reading continues to grow. Siegfried has

been called the Ring's scherzo, and he evokes both its youthful energy and darker undercurrents, with excellent playing from the augmented Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.

His first act flies swiftly, unusually fitting onto a single CD, his Act II lyricism rightly unhurried. And, as before, he has a top-drawer cast. Matthias Goerne caps his Walküre Wotan with a distinguished Wanderer, relishing his sardonic, ambiguous lines and shading his already dark tones with sadness and regret. Werner Van Mechelen's Alberich isn't ideally sinister, but sings rather than barks, as does

David Cangelosi's forceful Mime. Falk Struckmann's dragon is leathery-voiced but well characterised, Deborah Humble a richly numinous Erda, and Valentina Farcas's Woodbird trills elegantly judged. Heidi Melton's Brünnhilde is slightly less convincing; her bright soprano seems less powerful and steady than on stage, her phrasing sometimes awkward, in 'Ewig war ich' for example.

But every Siegfried hangs on the title role, and Simon O'Neill's steely, bright-toned heldentenor encompasses this killer part with deceptive ease, even the forging scene's ringing high notes, and

only moments of dryness. If he misses some character points, he also manages to suggest youthful ardour without thuggishness. I've heard none finer in recent years. Add vivid if rather upfront recording (potentially amazing on Blu-ray) and you have a highly enjoyable performance.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the BBC Music Magazine website at www.classical-music.com

Andriessen

Theatre of the World

Leigh Melrose, Lindsay Kesselman, Steven van Watermeulen, Mattijs van de Woerd, Marcel Beekman, Cristina Zavalloni; Los Angeles Philharmonic/Reinbert de Leeuw Nonesuch 7559-79361-8 98:31 mins



Louis Andriessen has never been one to waste his prodigious intellectual resources on

ephemera or the incidental. Since bursting onto the world stage in the 1970s with an ebulliently aggressive, Marx- and bebopinspired minimalism, his palette has further expanded to embrace a cornucopia of styles; often within the same piece, but seamlessly integrated and focused like a laser on profound questions of humanity.

Theatre of the World (2015) seems to pick up where La Commedia (2008) - Andriessen's last, Dantean opera - left off: with grotesque, ironic visions of hell. There is no narrative in the usual sense, but a series of tableaux featuring the Jesuit, Athanasius Kircher (1601-80), whose determination to summarise and link all contemporary knowledge to Catholicism inspired him to equally extraordinary feats of scholarship and charlatanism.

What is truth and what fiction? And what does posterity's view of Kircher tell us about knowledge itself? This live recording, with an exemplary cast and Los Angeles Philharmonic on brilliant form under conductor Reinbert de Leeuw, captures the gruesome, morbid melancholy of a Faustian pact – but with key glimmers of beauty via the mystic Sor Juana (Cristina Zavalloni); a Mexican nun and scholar/poet whom Kircher (Leigh Melrose) finds erotically 'affecting'.

Sonic gargoyles and cod-science entwine in smoke and mirrors and multiple languages - as the Boy (Lindsay Kesselman) turns out to be the Devil, and Pope Innocent (Marcel Beekman) a nincompoop. Boogie-woogie witches and a cheesy romance lend cruel, parodic twists to a penetrating scrutiny of art and reason. Steph Power

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Opera Reviews

Berlioz

Les Troyens

Joyce DiDonato, Michael Spyres, Marie Nicole Lemieux, Stéphane Degout, Nicolas Courjal, Marianne Crebassa, Hanna Hipp, Cyrille Dubois, Stanislas de Barbeyrac, Philippe Sly, Agnieszka Sławińska; Les Choeurs de l'Opéra national du Rhin; Badischer Staatsopernchor; Choeur & Orchestre philharmonique de Strasbourg/John Nelson Erato 9029576220 234:17 mins (4 CDs, plus DVD)



Any new Les Trovens is still an event, the more so coming from France. This Berlioz opera

owes its present status chiefly to Anglo-Saxons, in particular the famous 1960s stagings by Scottish Opera under Sir Alexander Gibson, and Covent Garden under Sir Colin Davis, whose recording has dominated the field for half a century. John Nelson, however, claims to have conducted Les Troyens more often than anyone else, and his experience shows.

Davis is still subtler, more articulate, but Nelson drives the drama with unforced tempos but ample theatrical vitality

and grandeur. Taken from two live concerts highlighted in the accompanying DVD, it doesn't gloss over minor slips, duff entries and so on, but they're hardly obtrusive and the whole expanse of the (garish red) Strasbourg hall is used to provide distant perspectives, offstage horns and so on.

Nelson also offers a strong cast. Marie-Nicole Lemieux is French-Canadian, a full mezzo apparently better suited to Dido than Cassandra, but she brightens her tone appropriately, showing occasional strain on higher notes but also unusual tenderness and vulnerability. Michael Spyres isn't as heroic an Aeneas as Jon Vickers, and sometimes nasal, but sings with lyrical grace and spirit and decent if not perfect French. Joyce DiDonato sings Dido with characteristic security and expressiveness, though her rapid vibrato is noticeable and her French slightly over-precise; she isn't as warmly natural as Susan Graham on John Eliot Gardiner's DVD or as heartbreaking as Janet Baker on Warner/EMI's excerpts. Cyrille Dubois and Hanna Hipp are attractive as Iopas and Anna. Most of the generally excellent secondary roles, the orchestra and two of the choruses are French, enhancing

this recording's idiomatic feeling. It doesn't eclipse Davis, or Gardiner's very special period-instrument original version, but it joins them as a strong recommendation. Michael Scott Rohan

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Debussy

Pelléas et Mélisande

Magdalena Kožená, Christian Gerhaher, Gerald Finley, Bernarda Fink, Franz Josef Selig, Elias Mädler, Joshua Bloom; London Symphony Orchestra/Simon Rattle LSO Live LSO 0790 (hybrid CD/SACD, plus Audio Blu-ray) 165:47 mins (3 discs)



Pelléas et Mélisande requires deftness and subtlety. Sir Simon Rattle delivers,

evoking Debussy's half-lit, dappled colours and exceptionally refined understated ambiguity with apparent ease. The cast in this LSO Live set is strong, if not always entirely idiomatic. As in earlier productions, Magdalena Kožená's Mélisande has a firm streak of red-blooded coquettish defiance that is effective, even if it belies the character's customary blanched fragility. Christian Gerhaher's Pelléas is similarly finely sung, if a little too knowing. Franz-Josef Selig and Bernarda Fink are a richlytoned Arkel and audibly anxious Geneviève respectively. Special plaudits should go to Gerald Finley, who chillingly conveys Golaud's slide from caring pity to jealous, controlling menace.

The frisson here is not just that of audibly live performances, for the Barbican hosted a semi-staging by Peter Sellars, a fact curiously unacknowledged in the set. Nonetheless, there is the palpable sense of unfolding drama that is realised, not just imagined, the intense passions of Act IV erupting from the speakers. Rattle draws myriad nuances without ever losing sight of either the textural balance or the overall pacing. In his hands, for instance, the bassoons in the first Act II interlude are both prophetic of The Firebird and suggest the start of Golaud's descent into darkness. Every moment counts.

All of this is only possible thanks to the inspired playing of the London Symphony Orchestra under Rattle, with superb characterisation from

the woodwind, while the strings seemingly resonate from within full-bodied one moment, translucent the next. Moreover, the recorded sound is typically outstanding, especially in surround. All bases are covered, the opera being presented on three hybrid SACDs or a single Blu-ray Audio disc, making this a $sonically \, luxurious \, set \, at \, a \, bargain$ price. Christopher Dingle

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Verdi

Macbeth (DVD)

Plácido Domingo, Ekaterina Semenchuk, Ildebrando d'Arcangelo, Joshua Guerrero; LA Opera Chorus & Orchestra/James Conlon; dir. Darko Tresnjak (Los Angeles, 2016) Sony 88985403579 149 mins (2 discs)



Macbeth is the first of Verdi's great Shakespearean operas. Much earlier than the others, it doesn't compare with

the original play in complexity or depth, but is still a major departure for the composer – especially the revised version, which is what is performed here.

The Los Angeles Opera is not one of the most celebrated opera houses, but Plácido Domingo has long been associated with it, and presumably can choose what he sings. Macbeth is the latest of what are now his quite numerous excursions into the Verdi baritone repertoire, which he has been cultivating for the last eight years. For a singer in his mid-seventies his voice is still in astoundingly good shape – it doesn't sound old, and still has flexibility and power. But it is still the voice of a tenor, albeit one with a limited range: there are none of the darker resonances of the true baritone, and since he now looks old, the discrepancy is all the more disconcerting.

He is not helped by the staging, which is virtually non-existent: robes are heavy and elaborate, but there are almost no props and so no atmosphere, and the limited range of Domingo's gestures is cruelly exposed. The Lady, as Verdi called her, is Ekaterina Semenchuk, but given what the composer wanted from the role, she sings far too beautifully and has hardly more character than her stage husband.

Reissues Reviewed by Michael Scott Rohan



Mozart Don Giovanni

Nimbus NI 7964 (1956) 189:30 mins (3 discs) Georg Solti's only Glyndebourne appearance, from a 1956 broadcast, often somewhat driven but always mercurial and dramatic, with a classic cast (women especially), ★★★★



R Strauss Salome

Decca 483 1498 (1962) 99:10 mins (2 discs) Steely, vampiric **Birgit Nilsson** is an improbable teenage princess, but Solti's conducting keeps this among the finest versions. The remastered sound, especially on the Blu-ray, is amazing. ★★★★



R Strauss Elektra

Decca 483 1494 (1967) 107:24 mins (2 discs) Birgit Nilsson's terrifying but tender Elektra, Solti's searing conducting, exceptional cast and playing, combine in John Culshaw's atmospheric recording to make this still the definitive version. $\star\star\star\star\star$



R Strauss Die Frau ohne Schatten Sterling CDA-1696/98-2 (1975) 176:10 mins (3 discs) Issued to celebrate Siv Wennberg's Empress, this famous live performance also features Birgit Nilsson as the Dyer's Wife. Impressive. ★★★

Opera Reviews

The Witches are a jolly crew, and the Banquo of Ildebrando D'Arcangelo is superb, the star of the show. James Conlon's conducting is vigorous and idiomatic, as one would expect. But as with Domingo's other ventures into baritone territory, it must be considered a respectable failure. *Michael Tanner*

PERFORMANCE PICTURE & SOUND

From Melba to Sutherland: Australian

Singers on Record

Songs and arias by Gounod, Puccini, Massenet, Verdi, Balfe, Schumann, Saint-Saëns et al Nellie Melba, Joan Sutherland, Gertrude Johnson, Frances Alda, Eileen Boyd, John Brownlee et al Eloquence 482 5892 311 mins (4 discs)



Many familiar singers are from the Commonwealth, Australia and New Zealand

in particular. Not just stars like Nellie Melba, Joan Sutherland, Kiri te Kanawa and June Bronhill, but those sturdy performers who became mainstays of all our opera companies throughout the last century. At that time, of course, to complete their studies and make a living, they usually came to Europe. Many, like 'Melba' (Helen Mitchell) and 'Margherita Grandi' (Margaret Gard) took cod-European stage names, although sometimes, like Florence Austral and Elsa Stralia, with cheeky giveaways.

This set gives an invaluable historical cross-section of Antipodean singers in both commercial and rare archive recordings, from grand-operatic voices like Albert Lance and Yvonne Minton to more popular artists like Bronhill, Peter Dawson and the magnificent bass Malcolm McEachern, famous as 'Flotsam'; and even music-hall figures like Florrie Forde. It reminds us of some whose international careers were tragically cut short - Marjorie Lawrence, Marie Collier, Deborah Riedel. That said, it can't be called exhaustive, with some curious inclusions and exclusions - if Hunter, why not Alberto Remedios? The title may annoy New Zealanders, appropriating some on the basis of various Australian links - Frances Alda, Heather Begg, Rosina Buckman – but not, for example,

celebrated bass Noel Mangin.
And one misses distinguished recent Australians like Jonathan Summers and Rosamund Illing. The documentation sometimes seems inadequate, for instance the ENO Wagner roles that crowned Clifford Grant's career are ignored. It's still a fascinating set. Michael Scott Rohan

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

L'Opéra

Works by Gounod, Massenet, Bizet, Offenbach, Berlioz et al Jonas Kaufmann (tenor), Sonya Yoncheva (soprano), Ludovic Tézier (baritone); Bavarian State Orchestra/ Bertrand de Billy

Sony 88985390762 74:47 mins



Jonas Kaufmann stretches for top notes now that he used to pull out of the air effortlessly. The

lyric tenor is sliding into baritone and rarely if ever sounds like the Georges Thill whom he professes to admire in a sleevenote interview. And while Kaufmann may have worked hard at his French there are moments when it comes from the East bank of the Rhine.

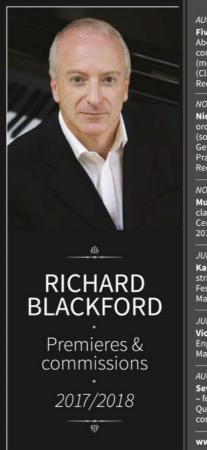
Yet Kaufmann is a consummate artist who rethinks everything that he sings. His Des Grieux in *Manon* is less the love-struck adolescent than an aspiring priest caught up in the obsession of profane love; Werther is a man and a mind at the end of its tether; and Vasco in 'Pays merveilleux ...O paradis' from Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* a traveller who has stumbled upon Eden. You can almost forgive the hooded, crooner-like tone that Kaufmann favours when his characters are interrogating their souls.

At last comes the best. Two magnificent numbers from Berlioz: Faust magicked by Marguerite in 'Merci, doux crépescule!', and Aeneas certain that he must leave Dido. Bertrand de Billy and the Bavarian State Orchestra are with their soloist every bar of the way, with handsome woodwinds and opalescent string tone. You can happily exchange a slightly uncertain opening phase in the aria from Les Troyens for the muscular hero caught between love and duty who emerges a moment later. Christopher Cook

PERFORMANCE RECORDING







AUGUST 2017

Five Naidu Songs – Aberystwyth MusicFest commission, Rosanna Cooper (mezzo soprano) David Campbell (Clarinet) Solem Quartet. Recorded for Nimbus Records

NOVEMBER 2017

Niobe – for solo violin and orchestra, Tamsin Waley-Cohen (soloist),Czech Philhramonic, Ben Gernon (conductor). Rudolfinum Prague 11th. November 2017. Recorded for Signum Classics

NOVEMBER 2017

Murmurmations – for flute and clarinet. Recorded in Manoukian Centre Westminster November 2017 for Nimbus Records

JULY 2018

Kalon – for string quartet and string orchestra. Cheltenham Festival commission. BBC NOW Martyn Brabbins (conductor)

JULY 2018

Violin Concerto (UK premiere), English Music Festival. Rupert Marshall-Luck (soloist)

AUGUST 2018

Seven Hokusai Miniatures – for string quartet – Solem Quartet, Aberystwyth MusicFest commission

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Choral & Song

CHORAL & SONG CHOICE



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George Hall applauds the teamwork of soprano Carolyn Sampson and countertenor Iestyn Davies



Carolyn Sampson and

Iestyn Davies are well

matched in vibrancy

Lost is My Quiet

Duets and Solo Songs: Purcell/Britten: Sound the Trumpet, Beat the Drum; Lost is My Quiet Forever, etc; Mendelssohn: Drei Lieder, Op. 77, etc; Quilter: Love calls through the summer night, etc; Schumann: Drei Duette, Op. 43, etc Carolyn Sampson (soprano), Iestyn Davies

(countertenor), Joseph Middleton (piano)

BISBIS-2279 (hybrid CD/SACD) 79:04 mins

The art of vocal duetting is exemplified at its best in this recital by two of today's finest British singers, working with an accompanist of equal merit.

The title track, *Lost is My Quiet*, is a Purcell setting heard here (as with the remaining five items by the composer) in Benjamin Britten's clever realisation: applying considerable judgement to their task, the voices of Carolyn Sampson and Iestyn Davies are well matched here in terms of colour and vibrancy — an accomplishment they deliver throughout.

The programming has been intelligently planned, with roughly equal portions of Purcell/Britten, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Quilter, giving us four groups from three different periods and traditions. As

well as duets, each singer has solo items: individual highlights include Sampson moving around the notes of Purcell's *If music be the food of love* with impeccable skill, while she makes time stand still in Schumann's *Stille Liebe*. Davies shines in Quilter's perfect setting of Shelley's *Music, when soft voices die* and in his in-depth exploration of Purcell's *Music for a While*.

-depth exploration of Purcell's *Music for a While*. Yet the most memorable tracks are inevitably the

duets, with Joseph Middleton's striking playing reminding us how essential quality pianism is to such enterprises. Purcell's naughty *Celemene*, Mendelssohn's charming *Maiglöckchen und die Blümelein* and

Quilter's sultry Weep you no more, sad fountains all hit the spot. The welcome Quilter pieces include an unusual duet from his variously titled operetta Rosmé, staged (as Julia) at Covent Garden in 1936, which has a real Viennese waltz-like lilt to it.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

**** ****

Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the BBC Music Magazine website at www.classical-music.com

Brahms

An English Requiem

Mary Bevan (soprano), Marcus Farnsworth (baritone), James Baillieu; Choir of King's College, London/ Joseph Fort; Richard Uttley (piano) Delphian DCD34195 65:18 mins



Brahms's 'English' Requiem was the name bestowed on the work for its first British

performance in St James's Hall, London in 1873. Two years earlier, though, it had been premiered in this piano duet version in Wimpole Street.

Removing the orchestra and the German language is bound to diminish the scope of such a work. What it does is give us access to the libretto and a glimpse of how English Victorians heard Brahms, through the prism of Handel and drawing-room Mendelssohn, and how they adopted his carefully non-conformist work and made it their own. An 1872 Bösendorfer lends tawny colour to The Sixteen's fine recording with piano duet (on Coro). Here in this new recording there's a leaner, revised edition (by Michael Musgrave and Joseph Fort), a cooler, darker modern Steinway, and a student choir.

Their 'How lovely is thy dwelling place' has a nimble, self-effacing sweetness, which couldn't be further from the numinous glow of Klemperer's majestic recording with the Philharmonia, for example. Soprano Mary Bevan consoles with richly penetrating ardour in 'Ye now are sorrowful', while the excellent Marcus Farnsworth sounds too smoothly Anglican in 'Lord, make me to know', without the craggier edge of German. Pianists Richard Uttley and James Baillieu glide ably through, generating impressive momentum in 'Behold, all flesh is as the grass' (though the choir men are weak), and energy in 'Here on earth we have no continuing place', though here their thundering running octaves can't help sounding a little like Saint-Saëns's practising pianists.

It's modest, unshowy. Brahms without grandeur, Brahms translated. *Helen Wallace*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Choral & Song Reviews

Fauré

Requiem; Cantique de Jean Racine; Messe basse; Fugues in A minor & E minor; Motets Sarah Yanovitch, Nola Richardson (soprano), Edmund Milly (bass), Grace Cloutier (harp); Yale Schola Cantorum/ David Hill; Robert Bennesh (organ) Hyperion CDA 68209 68:04 mins



Another version of the Requiem? The instrumental accompaniment has been arranged here by

David Hill for violin, cello, harp and organ. In principle, there is nothing to gainsay this, given that even the well-known version with full orchestra may not be by Fauré. In practice too, it works extremely well, with the two strings bringing out the subsidiary lines that were always a feature of his writing, while the harp adds just that touch of ethereality. The singing is splendid. The baritone soloist Edmund Milly has just the cantor-like voice Fauré specified, with no boom or bluster, and the top choral parts are clear and bell-like. The two soprano soloists display slightly more vibrato than their choral counterparts, but certainly not enough to cause dismay.

The motets are a treasure trove of elegant modulations, each in every way beautifully crafted with never a bar too many. Hill's instrumentally expanded version of the Cantique de Jean Racine is equally effective again highlighting how much Fauré owed to his essentially contrapuntal teaching at the École Niedermeyer. My only slight grumble is with the liner notes, which do not mention the edition of Jean-Michel Nectoux, who found the parts of the original version in the Madeleine archives, and which claim Fauré never wrote an opera. Roger Nichols

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Fanny Mendelssohn Complete songs, Vol. 3

Complete songs, Vol. 3 Susana Gaspar (soprano), Kitty Whately (mezzo soprano), Gary Griffiths, Manuel Walser (baritone), Malcolm Martineau (piano) Champs Hill Records CHRCD 124 59:33 mins



It's time to stop pigeonholing Fanny Hensel (née Mendelssohn) as a female composer. Felix Mendelssohn's older sister, who died tragically aged 42, was never demurely feminine, nor predictable – she was simply a genius. Singers, pianists, teachers – get hold of the scores you can find! Too much of her music is sitting unpublished in libraries, and I hope this recording helps change that.

Mendelssohn could certainly turn out the elegant Mozartian songs her milieu appreciated. But she excels in the tragic and dramatic. Indeed, the uncanny rumbling piano textures and formal freedom of *In Herbst* could have been written half a century later. The fizzing excitement of *Nach Süden* captures Mendelssohn's love of Italy.

She set the great poets – Goethe, Lenau, Eichendorff – and had a real affinity with the ambivalent, passionate poetry of Heine, as we hear in the unsettling *Fichtenbaum und Palme*. On the other hand, the dignified Bach-steeped counterpoint underpinning the tenderly wrought melody of *Die frühen Gräber* (by the Classical poet Klopstock) also moved me to tears.

I particularly appreciate Manuel Walser's warm, flexible sound, which fuses clarity of text with Mendelssohn's beautiful musical lines. Susana Gaspar's rich voice brings grandeur to the repertoire. All singers are supported by Malcolm Martineau's delicate handling of the piano textures. The recording's intimate sound conjures up the interior world of the Berlin salon which fostered this superbly crafted music. Natasha Loges

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Ristori

Cantatas for soprano: Lavinia a Turno; Didone abbandonata; Nice a Tirsi; Oboe Concerto

Maria Savastano (soprano), Jon Olaberria (oboe); Ensemble Diderot/ Johannes Pramsohler

Audax Records ADX 13711 68:12 mins



Ensemble Diderot has previously doffed its cap to the Dresden Court on disc, taking its cue from Handel's

visit in 1719. Among the composers represented was the little-known Frantisek Ignác Antonín Tùma, and this repeat flourish rehabilitates another under-sung hero. A younger contemporary of JS Bach, the Italianborn Giovanni Alberto Ristori



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Reissues Reviewed by Natasha Loges



Schubert Winterreise

Harmonia Mundi HMA 1902066 (2010) 73:01 mins
Tenor Werner Güra and pianist Christoph Berner
are alert to every nuance of text and music in this
evocative account using a historic piano which brings
a fragile, sepia-tinted quality. ★★★★



Heinz Rehfuss The Decca Recitals

Eloquence 482 4607 (1953-56) 81:39 mins
Post-WW2 Swiss baritone Heinz Rehfuss's creamy,
lyric voice is still compelling in this meditative
programme of songs by Musorgsky, Wolf and
Schubert. Gorgeous expressive delivery with pianists
Hans Willi Hauslein and Frank Martin.



Spanish Romances Eloquence 482 5944 (1966/78) 85:13 mins (2 discs)

Soprano *Pila Lorengar*'s singing is luminous, passionate and technically polished in this appealing programme of songs with guitar (Siegfried Behrend) and piano (Alicia Larrocha). ***



Jacques Jansen The Decca Recitals

Eloquence 482 4603 (1953/55) 67:47 mins

Jacques Jansen's subtle, light-timbred baritone with
Jacqueline Bonneau's superb accompaniment gives
a real insight into interpreting French song (Debussy,
Ravel and Chabrier), which here ranges from elusive
to nostalgic to humorous.*

served the Elector's Hofkapelle for nigh on 40 years, and the three cantatas setting texts by the Princess Maria Antonia of Bavaria are late works; beneficiaries, arguably, of an ear-opening spell in Naples a decade earlier when two of his operas were presented at the San Carlo theatre.

Each cantata invokes a feisty woman wracked by the torments of thwarted love. Two of them draw on Virgil's *Aeneid*; and all are exuberantly operatic, sporting well-turned arias that sometimes fall back on cliché but detonate turbulent fireworks as required, and elaborately detailed recitatives affording Johannes Pramsohler's crack instrumentalists a heightened share in the unfolding dramas.

Soprano María Savastano combines smouldering fury with sovereign presence (step forward Dido's 'Quante volte'), though the volatile emotional ebb and flow can be under-modulated in places. After all the anguished breast-beating, a genial oboe concerto, genially despatched by Jon Olaberria, restores benign equilibrium. *Paul Riley*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Schubert

Nacht & Träume: Lieder with orchestra – arr. Berlioz, Brahms, Britten, Krawczyk, Liszt, Mottl, Reger, R Strauss & Webern Wiebke Lehmkuhl (mezzo soprano), Stanislas de Barbeyrac (tenor); Accentus; Insula Orchestra/ Laurence Equilbey Erato 9029576943 50:00 mins



One of the loveliest ways for composers to show their admiration for their predecessors

is through arrangements. This recording unites a wide selection of orchestral arrangements of some of Schubert's best-loved songs. Opening with a treatment of *Ständchen* by Felix Mottl (arranger of Wagner's *Wesendonck-Lieder*), we hear Schubert through Britten, Richard Strauss, Reger, Liszt, Brahms, Berlioz and Webern in a surprisingly coherent musical experience.

The revelation is the French composer Franck Krawczyk (b. 1969) whose bubbling arrangement of *An Sylvia* had me smiling for days. His *Nacht und*

Träume is a sea of warm woodwind. Der Gondelfahrer and Coronach, for male and female chorus respectively, are balanced brilliantly in his atmospheric renditions.

There are other delights. Liszt's semi-operatic *Die junge Nonne* is terrific fun, conjuring up Gothic horror. We see Brahms's unmistakable fingerprint on *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*. And Berlioz – the master orchestrator – bestows operatic grandeur on *Erlkönig*. Webern turns *Du bist die Ruh* into a translucent, glinting jewel. And thankfully, the good bones of Schubert's songs can support them even through overelaborate treatments like Richard Strauss's *Ganymed*.

Ultimately, Schubert's songs were conceived through the piano, and I occasionally missed that instrument's flexibility and responsiveness. Im Abendrot, a gloriously dignified song, felt a touch unvielding and ordinary under Laurence Equilbey's baton. Wiebke Lehmkuhl and Stanislas de Barbeyrac match the orchestral heft well, but some slightly hasty tempos robbed a few songs of their original reflectiveness and intimacy. Still, the Insula Orchestra sounds warm and colourful in this intriguing, beautifully conceived recording. Natasha Loges

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Kyrie

Poulenc: Mass in G; Kodály: Missa Brevis; Janáček: Otčenáš

Joseph Wicks, Glen Dempsey (organ); Anne Denholm (harp); Choir of St John's College Cambridge/ Andrew Nethsingha Signum SIGCD 489 63:32 mins



Poulenc's delightful and often moving Mass in G sprang from a mid-life reconversion to

the faith of his youth. The prevalent mood is one of celebration which St John's Choir captures admirably; there is also a lively engagement with the contrasts which make the Gloria so appealing. Poulenc's tendency to pair phrases can, in the wrong hands, lead to a slightly monotonous effect, but with careful shading, as is the case here with Andrew Nethsingha, the results add significantly to the music's sense of direction.

Kodály's *Missa Brevis* was composed in extremis as Soviet troops attacked Nazi-occupied Budapest. Profound and sincere, the setting is a work of hope and passionate belief in his native land. While at times the work is sombre, it also communicates infectious joy, excellently captured here, in the Gloria and the latter parts of the Credo, and a strong sense of defiant affirmation in the face of adversity in the organ postlude.

Janáček's Otčenáš (Our Father) certainly doesn't belong to the liturgical world of the two masses; it was written to accompany a series of tableaux vivants, a popular theatrical entertainment among the Czechs, based on paintings of Russian peasants at prayer prompted by lines from the Lord's Prayer, staged in the Brno theatre in 1901 as a fundraiser for a women's refuge. The choir captures the other-worldly atmosphere of the opening and mostly navigates the Czech with conviction.

If at times the choral sound is not ideally integrated, as a whole



BACKGROUND TO... Carrie Jacobs-Bond (1862-1946)

Born in Janesville, Wisconsin, Carrie Bond showed a talent for improvising songs from an early age. Her only formal training was with local teachers before she married at 18. Her first songs were published in 1894, but interest from publishers waned, so she formed her own publishing company, Carrie

Jacobs-Bond & Son. Consequently she owned every note she wrote, which was rare in that era. Of the 175 songs she published, two were particularly successful: *I Love You Truly* (1901) sold over a million copies, and *A Perfect Day* (1910) sold eight million copies of sheet music and over five million records. She performed to President Roosevelt at the White House.

Choral & Song Reviews

these well-recorded performances are certainly recommendable. Jan Smaczny

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

*** ****

Music for the Queen of Heaven

Contemporary Marian Motets by L Berkeley, Jackson, Weir, Howells, A Panufnik, R Panufnik, McDowall, Martin, Frances-Hoad, Campbell, Dodgson & MacMillan

The Marian Consort/Rory McCleery Delphian DCD34190 59:31 mins



This is the Marian Consort's eighth CD for Delphian, and just the second time

that it has ventured beyond the Renaissance repertoire which made its reputation, into the realm of contemporary and 20th-century composers.

The theme is music inspired by the Virgin Mary. Should that suggest a programme of unremitting solemnity, try starting with track two, Judith Weir's blithe, lightly tripping Ave Regina caelorum, given a delightfully aerated performance by the six Marian singers.

At the other end of the expressive spectrum is the opening of Andrzej Panufnik's *Song to the Virgin Mary*, where a crystalline solo by soprano Charlotte Ashley sways tantalisingly in the ether. Supple, delicately balanced part singing energises the warm thrum of Cecilia McDowall's *Alma redemptoris mater*, while in Matthew Martin's *Ave virgo sanctissima* the range of dynamic detail and tonal contrast achieved by just six voices, in double choir configuration, is highly impressive.

The same impression, of strength in small numbers, is evident amid the hocketing clamour of Cheryl Frances-Hoad's *Gaudete et laetare*. And although occasionally – in Howells's *Salve Regina*, for instance – more voices might be beneficial, the Marian Consort's performances deliver full value in terms of expressive range and sophistication.

Pitch-perfect tuning and immaculately clean ensemble grace the poised account of James MacMillan's *Ave maris stella* which ends the CD. Paul Baxter's sensitively engineered recording,

and an intriguing choice of cover art (Trygve Skogrand's *Madonna* of the Bus-Stop), add further to the attractions of this eminently listenable recital. *Terry Blain*

PERFORMANCE **
RECORDING **

Two Little Words

Songs by Head, Palmer, Murray, Jacobs-Bond, Horovitz, Britten, Falla, Schubert, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Dring, Sondheim, Pritchett & Brahe

Felicity Palmer (mezzo soprano), Simon Lepper (piano) Resonus RES 10199 62:33 mins



In this hour-long recital Dame Felicity Palmer celebrates 50 years of a career that has

seen her succeed in diverse genres to a degree as consistent as it has been wide-ranging. With her mezzo still steady and her diction a model, she is able to convey the varied repertoire here with admirable focus and expressivity, ideally supported by expert accompanist Simon Lepper.

The repertoire includes unusual items. Two songs by the singer's musician father, Marshall Palmer, are attractive souvenirs of his talent, while in old-fashioned ballads by the likes of Mary H Brahe (not the obvious Bless this house) and Carrie Jacobs-Bond (I'll walk beside you) Palmer avoids sentimentality and thereby gives them dignity.

It's good, too, to hear one of Michael Head's neglected but well-crafted songs amid Britten in French, Tchaikovsky in Russian, Falla in Spanish and a clutch of Lieder: the vivid interpreter in Palmer instils real grit and venom into Falla's *Polo* and is impassioned in 'None but the lonely heart', while her infectious sense of humour shines through encore-type pieces by Madeleine Dring and John Pritchett.

A dramatic challenge is the substantial scena from *Macbeth* set by Joseph Horovitz, in which Palmer is every inch Shakespeare's ambitious consort, while Lepper's highlights include the thrumming guitar-like figurations in Falla's folk-songs and his magical legato in the Schubert *Rosamunde* Romance. *George Hall*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING





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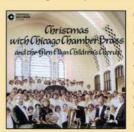
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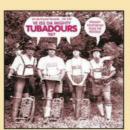
CD875: Captured! The Bassoon Brothers. "Just plain hilarious" (Seattle Times). Fanfare for the Common Bassoonist, Hey Jude, Mexican Hat Dance, My Funny Valentine, Habanera (from Carmen), Godfather Suite, Pizzicato Polka, Roll out the Barrel, Yankee Doodle, and more. Sequel to Wanted! and just as hilarious.

CD873: Wanted! The Bassoon Brothers. Fu-

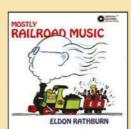
neral March of a Marionette, Alexander's Ragtime Band, Weber Fantasy, Hall of the Mountain King, Bugler's Holiday, Bizet Dragoons (Carmen), A La Turk, Last Tango in Bayreuth, and more. Bassoon section, Oregon Symphony.



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CD520: MOSTLY RAILROAD MUSIC, by Eldon Rathburn. Delightful CD by one of Canada's foremost film composers. Three Steam Calliope Pieces, Junction (jaw harps), Rise and Fall of the Steam Railroad (calliope, jaw harp, synthesizer, banjos, mandolin, percussion, piano), Ghost Train, Schönberg vs. Gershwin, Dvorak at 155th Street, Hindemith Rides the Merchants Limited, Thoreau's Train, etc. "an absolutely unique and (Fanfare) "Evocative, imagistic, and delightful.

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Chamber

CHAMBER CHOICE



Young Mendelssohn delivered with passion

Bayan Northcott admires the youthful intensity of Quatuor Arod as it makes its recording debut



Mendelssohn's

A minor Quartet is a

youthful masterpiece

Mendelssohn

String Quartets: No. 2 in A minor, Op. 13; No. 4 in E minor, Op. 44/2; Four Pieces, Op. 81; Frage, Op. 9/1* (arr. Aparailly)

*Marianne Crebassa (mezzo soprano); Quatuor Arod Warner Classics 9029576112 77:17 mins

Composed in the months following Beethoven's death, when Mendelssohn was just 18, the A minor

Quartet is a youthful masterpiece on a par with the preceding Octet and *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture, and arguably more inventive and original than either. It was the first score the brilliant

young players of the Quatuor Arod read through when they came together at the Paris Conservatoire in 2013, and has become something of their talisman. Here they deliver what must surely be one of the most intense, detailed and passionate accounts of it ever recorded.

Even in the work's calm introduction, which returns so touchingly at the very end of its innovatory cyclical structure, the nervous tension is palpable, and the first movement *Allegro* kicks off at a frantic pace one imagines cannot help degenerating into a

scramble – but which never does, such is these players' hair-trigger clarity of articulation and volatility of expression. They bring similar qualities to the manically inventive finale with its furious recitatives and impetuous flurries. Yet they are equally sensitive to the remote fugal wanderings of the slow movement and to the chilled sweetness of the Intermezzo third movement, with its elfin trio.

Under such committed and virtuosic treatment, neither the superbly sustained E minor Quartet, Op. 44 No. 2 of ten years later nor the miscellaneous Four Pieces, Op. 81 that Mendelssohn's

publisher threw together after his death, has the slightest chance of lapsing into the comfortable predictability for which some commentators have censured Mendelssohn's later output. This is a revelatory debut disc.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the BBC Music Magazine website at www.classical-music.com

Beethoven • Mozart

Mozart: Violin Sonatas: No. 18 in G, K301; No. 21 in E minor, K304; No. 26 in B flat, K378; **Beethoven:** Violin Sonata No. 1 in D, Op. 12 Ji Young Lim (violin), Dong Hyek Lim (piano)

Warner Classics 9029583950 67:44 mins



Winner of the 2015 Queen Elisabeth Competition, Ji Young Lim is joined by

multiple award-winning pianist Dong Hyek Lim in this recital. The programme offsets the first sonatas Mozart composed in which the violin is given a more prominent role against Beethoven's gently subversive First Sonata.

If in their distinguished ongoing Mozart series for Hyperion Alina Ibragimova and Cédric Tiberghien peel back layers of interpretative accretion to reveal pristine musical surfaces, Ji Young Lim and Dong Hyek Lim are closer to Itzhak Perlman and Daniel Barenboim (Deutsche Grammophon) in evincing the interpretative values of what feels increasingly like a bygone age. Without the slightest whiff of being 'historically informed', they weave a stylistically sensitive path through familiar territory, enveloping their listeners in an emotional cocoon of warmth, charm and elegance, further enhanced by deftly balanced, gently cushioned engineering.

One of the litmus tests in any Mozart recital is the heart-stopping change from minor to major (and back again) in the menuetto of the E minor Sonata, K304 (No. 21), and while Anne-Sophie Mutter and Lambert Orkis (recorded live on DG) remain uniquely compelling here, the Lims elicit a dignified purity at a slightly relaxed tempo that is captivating.

Again — and this is meant as a compliment — it is Itzhak Perlman and Vladimir Ashkenazy (Decca) who are brought most vividly to mind by the Lims' vibrantly affectionate take on Beethoven's Op. 12 No. 1, although there is a cantabile radiance about the talented South Korean team's performance that is especially beguiling. Julian Haylock

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Chamber Reviews

Brahms

Piano Trios Nos 1-3 Leonidas Kavakos (violin), Yo Yo Ma (cello), Emanuel Ax (piano) Sony 88985407292 83:80 mins (2 discs)



To the list of piano trio supergroups - Cortot, Thibaud and Casals; Rubinstein, Heifetz and

Feuermann; Gilels, Kogan and Rostropovich - can now be added Ax, Kavakos and Ma. Leonidas Kavakos fits seamlessly with regular partners Emanuel Ax and Yo-Yo Ma, and their performances of Brahms's three Piano Trios are gratifyingly expansive and red-blooded.

They appear to have undertaken this project not for business but for pleasure. This is perhaps most evident in the inner movements. Trio No. 1's scherzo has an irresistibly mischievous lightness, Kavakos's moments of glassy, vibrato-less tone adding to the tension. The corresponding movement of Trio No. 3 is whispering, almost ethereal, but the playing still has presence.

The dense outer movements, however, ideally need a stronger sense of long-view direction. Some passages are as nuanced and precisely weighed as one would expect from any of these three artists performing solo: in Trio No. 1. for instance, the way the thread towards the end of the first movement is handed from violin and piano to the cello and then back again. Yet just before that movement winds down, when violin and cello finally play the melody in octaves, should the joining together not seem more meaningful than it does here?

There's impeccable musicality and considerable relish in these performances, but there are more searching accounts. Erica Jeal

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Hindemith String Trios Nos 1 & 2 Schoenberg String Trio

Trio Zimmermann

BIS BIS-2207 (hybrid CD/SACD) 59:53 mins



As a viola player himself, Hindemith played in an ensemble together with

the violinist Szymon Goldberg and the cellist Emanuel Feuermann, so

he knew the workings of the string trio from the inside. The first of his two trios was written during his enfant terrible years in the 1920s. Beginning with an energetic Toccata and ending with a frenetic fugue, it includes a movement almost entirely in pizzicato – some four years before Bartók wrote a similar piece in his Fourth String Quartet. By the time he composed his second trio, nearly a decade later, Hindemith's style had mellowed, though its middle movement is again brilliantly playful.

Schoenberg half-jokingly described his string trio as the first work he composed following his own death. In the summer of 1946 he suffered a cardiac arrest, and was saved by an injection of adrenalin directly into his heart. According to the writer Thomas Mann, the string trio depicted Schoenberg's hospital experience in detail, down to the injections and a portrayal of the nurse who looked after him. Even without the benefit of hindsight, the music seems to hover between life and death. It runs the whole gamut of colouristic effects, and is hair-raisingly difficult to play. It's a piece that demands three virtuosos, and Frank Peter Zimmermann, Antoine Tamestit and Christian Poltéra certainly fit the bill on this disc. Their playing is phenomenally accomplished, as it is, too, in the Hindemith pieces. This is likely to be one of the chamber discs of the year. Misha Donat

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Shostakovich • Prokofiev • Rachmaninov

Shostakovich: Cello Sonata; Waltz No. 2: Prokofiev: Cello Sonata: Troika; Rachmaninov: Cello Sonata; Romance, Op. 34/14; plus arrangements of 'Kukushka', 'Virgin Mary, Put Putin Away', and 'Back in the USSR' Matt Haimovitz (cello), Christopher O'Riley (piano)

PentaTone PTC 5186 608 (hybrid CD/

SACD) 112:29 mins (2 discs)



Should you be in any doubt as to the message here, the booklet opens with a doublepage spread of

Vladimir Putin snogging Donald Trump. Not an illicit photograph,



but a bold piece of Lithuanian graffitti. Its musical equivalent is Pussy Riot's Punk Prayer Virgin Mary, Put Putin Away, based on an orthodox chorale, whose brutal distortion is achieved here with 'a styrofoam cup smashed behind the bridge', and a glass slide plucking the strings to articulate its spooky impertinence.

Matt Haimovitz explains that he began with the 'troika' of great Russian cello sonatas, before the theme of subversion and resistance suggested itself, and 'before the maelstrom of Russian interference' in the 2016 US election hit the headlines. The late Viktor Tsoi's Kukushka (which asks 'Where are you now, freedom of will?") already makes a poignant anthem, while Christopher O'Riley's barnstorming version of The Beatles' song 'Back in the USSR' is another reminder of how far we haven't travelled.

So much for the extras, which include a delightful rendition of Shostakovich's Waltz No. 2. In the sonatas, Haimovitz's approach is vibrato-saturated, lacking the agility demonstrated by some of his contemporaries, sweet but rather heavily perfumed. The Rachmaninov Sonata in G minor suffers here from a slack scherzo and some strangely congested, woozy playing in the *Allegro* finale. Christopher O'Riley's pianism is assured, even if the voicing isn't a match, say, for pianist Stephen Hough in his Hyperion recording with cellist Steven Isserlis.

Shostakovich's Sonata is leaner and more focused, though some of the passagework is ragged. Haimovitz has a well-fed sonority for Prokofiev's grandiose essay. The Moderato has a stealthy wit, but doesn't quite snap and crackle as it should, though the finale goes off like a rocket. Helen Wallace

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Ustvolskaya

Piano Sonata No. 1: Octet: Violin Sonata; Grand Duet for Cello and Piano

Alexander Kosoyan, Khanyafi Chinakaev (oboe), Mikhail Waiman, Alexander Stang, Arkady Liskovich, Abram Dukor, Fedor Saakov (violin), Oleg Stolpner (cello), Valery Znamensky (timpani), Oleg Malov, Maria Karandashova (piano) Northern Flowers NFPMA99122 70.28 mins



Here is an excellent introduction to Galina Ustvolskaya, whose direct and

uncompromising style amazingly reached maturity under Stalin. Her teacher, Shostakovich, confessed: 'It is not you who is influenced by me, but I by you.' Ustvolskaya's subsequent insistence that her work 'is in no way connected to that of any other composer' has contributed to her flinty music's rather daunting reputation. Don't be put off. Her protestation was presumably intended to jolt people

Reissues Reviewed by Julian Haylock



Rondo Violoncello Cello works by Villa-Lobos, Wagner, Bernstein, Bach et al

Harmonia Mundi HMA 1905240 (1997) 64:34 mins
A richly enjoyable programme of cello-ensemble
favourites, highlighted by Julius Engel's sublime,
Richard Strauss-in-overdrive Hymnus, expertly played
by the Cello-Ensemble Peter Buck, meticulously
balanced and radiantly engineered. ★★★★



Imogen Holst String Chamber Music NMCD236 (2008) 74:51 mins

It defies belief that until this recording led by violinist and cellist *Simon and Thomas Hewitt Jones* appeared much of this fine music, combining haunting Englishness with a distinctly French flavour, was virtually unknown. ****



Great Violinists: Kreisler, Vol. 7

Works by Beethoven, Wagner, Kreisler et al Naxos Historical 8.111406 (1921-25) 74:32 mins Expertly transferred and annotated by Ward Marston and Tully Potter, and featuring Fritz Kreisler's talented cellist brother Hugo, these winning performances capture the wistfulness of a bygone age. ★★★★



Maxim Vengerov Works by Schubert, Tchaikovsky and Ernst

Biddulph Recordings LAW 001 (1989) 72:58 mins Recorded shortly before Maxim Vengerov's 15th birthday (and a year before he won the Carl Flesch Competition), this captivating recital provides a tantalising glimpse of a prodigious talent about to take flight. ***

into listening to what she was saying rather than how she said it: one can easily recognise in her music an expressive language derived from Stravinsky, Bartók and even Prokofiev, for all its pared down and unsentimental manner.

This CD compiles recordings made in Leningrad in 1961 (the Violin Sonata), 1976 (Octet), and 1985 (Piano Sonata No. 1 and Grand Duet). Only the earliest recording really shows its age with a rather dry and muffled acoustic: but the actual performance of the Violin Sonata by Mikhail Waiman and Maria Karandashova is excellent. So too are the other performances. Oleg Malov's account of the First Piano Sonata is appropriately and severely neo-classical in flavour. Perhaps the most dramatic work of all is the Octet, scored for two oboes, four violins, piano and timpani – its third section with its plangent oboes and the timpani's steady beat sounding like a sinister relation to Stravinsky's Symphony of Psalms. Most varied in mood is the

Grand Duet, cellist Oleg Stolpner and Malov giving a by turns playful, acerbic, galumphing and serene account. *Daniel Jaffé*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



20th Century: American Scene

Copland: Violin Sonata; Elliott Carter: 4 Lauds for Solo Violin; Cage: Six Melodies for Violin and Piano Tai Murray (violin), Ashley Wass (piano) eaSonus EAS 29253 79:01 mins



The opening movement of Copland's Violin Sonata is dominated by a clipped,

recitativo style of writing that eschews big, cumulative gestures and can seem inconsequential. With the American violinist Tai Murray, it is anything but that. Her rosined, folksy tone has you listening as though to a genial

conversationalist, the soft-spoken piano of Ashley Wass providing apt, satisfying punctuation.

The sparsely textured *Lento* is sweet-toned, sad, and lingering in Murray's hands, while the finale's springy rhythms are delectably supple and elastic. I can't remember when I last enjoyed a performance of Copland's Sonata this much, or found so much to delight and stimulate in it.

Elliott Carter's 4 Lauds for Solo Violin are tougher music, but again Murray's abilities as a storyteller pin you raptly to the narrative.

There's no hectoring or blowsy rhetoric: Laud 2 ('Riconoscenza per Goffredo Petrassi') is a particularly compelling example of Murray's ability to make telling dynamic and expressive distinctions, without over-emphasis or inflation.

Cage's Six Melodies find Murray and Wass telepathically tied together in the music's metrically tricksy patterns, and sympathetically attuned to its meditative, non-selfaggrandising ethos.

If the Corigliano Sonata makes less impact, that's mainly because it's a harder work to connect with emotionally, for all the intense rhapsodising Murray brings to the *Lento*, and the sparks she strikes with Wass in the spiky, energetic finale. Still, this recital – first released in 2013, and now available in the UK – as a whole (with excellent liner notes by Carmen Romero) undoubtedly confirms Tai Murray's reputation as a violinist to keep a close eye on. *Terry Blain*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

British Cello Sonatas

Ireland: Cello Sonata; Delius Violin Sonata No. 3 (arr. Handy); Bax: Cello Sonata Lionel Handy (cello), Jennifer Hughes (piano) Lyrita SRCD.361 70:52 mins



The muted colours of Albert Goodwin's painting on the cover of the CD's booklet

points the way toward the muted hues of the British music within. Even when Ireland and Bax's cello sonatas of 1923 echo the composers' fascination with pagan landscapes and rituals, we're still worlds away from the Russian rumpus unleashed in *The Rite of Spring*. Yet within this music's grey limits there is much beauty to enjoy, further garnished by the sturdy if slightly broad-brush performances of Lionel Handy and Rosemary Hughes.

Admittedly, the transcription of Delius's Third Violin Sonata is not the disc's best feature. Delius's lyrical violin flights, at their most airborne in the second movement, do not translate well to the cello's registers. Who wants to see a silvery bird dressed in a brown overcoat?

In the Ireland, the greatest work here, Handy and Hughes are sometimes emotionally tentative compared to other executants on disc, though their reserve breaks at key points. In the Bax, a capacious bag of a work with plenty of loose stitching, Handy and Hughes ensure that the middle movement's lyrical ardour makes its mark. Throughout, Lyrita's crisp recording always helps, even shining a light into the cello's lowest corners.

One-fell-swoop listening of this CD will not suit everyone: so much musical introspection may cause claustrophobia. But for dedicated British followers? Almost manna from heaven. *Geoff Brown*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

BACKGROUND TO... John Ireland (1879-1962)



Born in Cheshire, Ireland travelled to London in his early teens where he enrolled

at the Royal College of Music shortly after his 14th birthday. After some years studying the organ, he studied composition under Stanford and piano under Frederick Cliffe. He himself eventually taught composition at the RCM, where his pupils included EJ Moeran and Benjamin Britten. His first major success was his Second Violin Sonata, composed in 1917 then performed by Albert Sammons and William Murdoch that year at the Aeolian Hall, London, His Cello Sonata followed in 1923.



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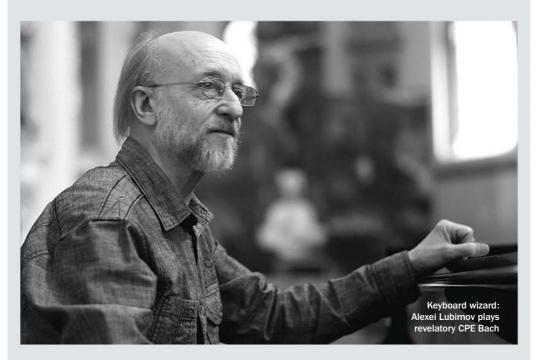
Instrumental

INSTRUMENTAL CHOICE



Lubimov finds the key to CPE Bach's magical music

Paul Riley marvels at the colours Alexei Lubimov conjures from an extraordinary keyboard instrument



The piano's beguiling

harp stop casts a

bewitching spell

CPE Bach

Tangere: Sonata in D minor, Wq. 57/4; Sonata in G, Wq. 55/6; Clavierstück für die rechte oder linke Hand allein in A, Wq. 117/1; plus Fantasies, Rondos and Solfeggi

Alexei Lubimov (tangent piano) ECM 476 3652 63:34 mins

Is there a more perennially inquisitive pianist than

Alexei Lubimov? His discography ranges from 18th-century Russian clavichord music to the ex-Soviet post-avant-garde; and that eclecticism extends to the choice of instrument – be it a Viennese

fortepiano for Schubert, or a 1913 Steinway to open up new lines of enquiry in Debussy. In the case of this latest release however, the instrument seems to have chosen the repertoire after an encounter with a ravishing 1794 tangent piano by Späth & Schmahl suggested the multi-coloured, mercurial volatility of that intrepid trailblazer: CPE Bach.

Indeed if CPE's music represents a synthesis of old and new, the piano exhibits similar qualities with a palette that can resemble a fortepiano squaring up to a clavichord with attitude. There's a hint of harpsichord and even cimbalom, and a beguiling harp stop casts a bewitching spell over the first of two pieces 'for right or left hand alone'. Assorted Fantasies and Solfeggi (including the breathless C minor one that ambushes most students at some point on the steps to pianistic Parnassus) form the centre of a palindromic programme framed by sonatas, rondos, plus two more extended Fantasies; and it's evident from the start

that here is the instrument (and performer) par excellence for CPE's restless, unfettered imaginings.

Lubimov owns every exquisitely calibrated nuance, whether scintillating in the elegantly turned

C major Solfeggio, or nailing the *Freye Fantasie*'s mixture of caprice and anguished aside. A bouquet, too, to the engineers who capture everything with such vibrant immediacy. Nothing short of a revelation.

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the BBC Music Magazine website at www.classical-music.com

Beethoven

Diabelli VariationsFilippo Gorini (piano)
Alpha Classics ALPHA 296 57:29 mins



This is, it soon becomes evident, one of the great interpretations of one of Beethoven's most invigorating,

far-ranging and finally ethereal works. It's played at the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn by Filippo Gorini, a young artist about whom we are given no information whatever in the accompanying booklet, though we have his essay on the work, which shows that he is as eloquent with his pen as with his fingers.

He has been taken up by a pianist as discriminating as Alfred Brendel, and joins him and Rudolf Serkin, Claudio Arrau, Sviatoslav Richter and Igor Levit as one of this work's finest exponents. Gorini is as alive as anyone to the humour in the work, which if overstressed can get tiresome on repeated hearings, but which this pianist realises is more demonic than merely jovial or surprising. The main challenge to the performer, though, is to give each of the extremely contrasting variations its own highly defined character while maintaining the work's forward impetus. The listener should feel at the end that he has had a grandly cumulative experience, ending with the breathtaking elegance and grace of that minuet, which, coming after the typically late-period profundity of the last few variations and the intense fugue, still seems the ideal conclusion. In all, this is a triumphant success. Michael Tanner

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

ING ***

Beethoven

Piano Sonatas Nos 3, 14, 23, 26 & 32; Variations on an Original Theme in C minor Evgeny Kissin (piano)

DG 479 7581 128:54 mins (2 discs)



Evgeny Kissin has never before released a disc of live Beethoven recordings: all but one of these

performances are exceptional, even by Kissin's stratospheric standards, the odd one out being the *Moonlight* Sonata. There is nothing revelatory

Instrumental Reviews



K From the archives

Is there anything new to reveal about Glenn Gould's Goldberg's recording? Andrew McGregor finds out



I think I've just worked out what this set actually is: it's a geek test. Take one of the most famous classical recordings of all time, one which most recording enthusiasts, pianophiles and Bach lovers will own, and repackage it so that it becomes irresistible all over again.

It's Glenn Gould's debut recording of JS Bach's Goldberg Variations, and for once there's no need to discuss the finished results. That's been the subject of intense critical scrutiny over the last half century. But some physical description is needed: an LP sized box that weighs about 4kgs containing a gatefold vinyl edition of the finished recording, a 280-page hardback coffeetable book, and seven CDs (Sony 88843014882). Seven? There's the finished recording, beautifully remastered, Gould discussing the Goldbergs in a rather stilted conversation with Tim Page, and the complete, previously unreleased recording sessions – the unedited master tapes made in Columbia's 30th Street Studios over four days in June 1955. It's fascinating hearing Gould complaining about the piano tuning, wondering whether or not that was the take, criticising his own playing, going over different variations again and again, the talkback with producer Howard Scott and engineer Fred Plaut as the takes pile up, and you can follow them in the book, faithfully transcribed alongside the pages of the score, interspersed with previously unseen photos. It's a compelling document, and the detailed documentation, from the photos of the tape reels and recording reports to Gould's famous chair and the interior of the studios themselves, allows us the most intimate access to Gould creating history.

It's not even my favourite recording of the Goldbergs, and of course I already have it. I have no idea whether I'll ever need to listen to the raw session recordings again. But I want this set; it's hit all the buttons. The geek test? I passed. Or failed. You decide which way it works but it's an extraordinary thing, and for Glenn Gould obsessives it's their birthday and Christmas rolled into one.



Andrew McGregor is the presenter of Radio 3's Record Review, broadcast each Saturday morning from 9am until 12.15pm

about the first two movements, and the third is a one-dimensional exercise with the notes at times congealing into an angry blur.

Kissin's revelations in the C major No. 3, Op. 2/3 include an unusually conversational opening, a finale delivered with laser-like clarity, and an Adagio played to adumbrate the great heaven-versus-hell dialogue of the Fourth Concerto – he freights this early masterpiece with huge emotional implications. The first movement of *Les Adieux* has vernal charm, 'Abwesenheit' is grace incarnate, and 'Das Wiedersehen' exudes sweetly breathless liberation. The *Appassionata* is magnificent: the first movement intensely atmospheric, the Andante imbued with noble simplicity, and the finale combining excitement and expressiveness in a way I have not heard in this piece before. In both this and the C minor No. 32, Op. 111 I find myself listening with awe, as though Kissin really is a divine conduit. I was present when this CD's recording of the final sonata was made in Verbier: I was bowled over then, and I'm bowled over now.

But the most extraordinary track is that of the 32 Variations. With some lasting just 11 seconds, and the kaleidoscope shaken vigorously each time, this work is a perennial teaser. Kissin's solution is to tear through it at breakneck speed, yet somehow he manages to let each variation flower brilliantly in its own way, oases of sylvan sweetness displaced by thunder, lamentation giving way to peals of bells. And he uses the final two variations to set a philosophical seal on it all: out of a collection of epigrams, deep meaning. Michael Church

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Chopin

24 Preludes; Piano Sonata No. 2; Scherzo No. 2 Cédric Tiberghien (piano) Hyperion CDA 68194 71:47 mins



The French pianist Cédric Tiberghien turns to a classic 'dark' Chopin selection for this attractive

programme. The fleeting visions of the 24 Preludes, the 'Funeral March' Sonata and the dazzling B flat minor Scherzo make an excellent group: not only richly inventive music with many nightmarish inclinations, but

also works that give the interpreter a chance to display every facet of their technique and imagination. These pieces are recorded so often, though, that any new addition needs to have something really worthwhile to say.

There are excellent moments in Tiberghien's Preludes: the beautiful voicing of No. 1, or the interesting pacing for the F minor, in which he holds back the energy at first, then lets it build to a tremendous release. On occasion, though, his predilection for over-pedalling for the effect of lingering overtones seems to misfire and simply becomes muddy: and the Sonata suffers from bangy touch, a slight deficiency of colouristic variety, and curious decisions such as odd moments of breath that feel misplaced – and the dogged thudding crescendo of the funeral march's reprise may be deliberately grotesque, but feels rather like being trampled underfoot. After this, too, the approach to the windswept finale feels, perhaps surprisingly, slightly tame. The B flat minor Scherzo redeems some of this with lyrical phrasing and near-operatic flair, and some pleasingly meditative moments in the middle section.

While the recorded sound quality is excellent, it's possible that the boomy acoustic of Henry Wood Hall does not complement the heavyhanded moments of this playing especially well. Jessica Duchen

PERFORMANCE RECORDING

Schubert

Piano Sonatas, D959 and D960 Krystian Zimerman (piano) DG 479 7588 82:01 mins



Krystian Zimerman recorded this disc in winter, in Japan, the hall blanketed by

three metres of snow. Snow so deep that one night, the pianist relates in the liner notes, he and his recording team had to shovel their way out -'But inside, it was another world.'

This whited-out landscape softly silent yet cavernously loud, familiar yet strange - seems apt for late Schubert. Here we have D959 and D960, two of his three last piano sonatas written not so long after that snowy journey of emotional desolation, the songcycle Winterreise. Is the journey's end found in these two sonatas,

Instrumental Reviews

which contain music of infinite sadness and resigned acceptance? Zimerman takes us into a place of deep introspection, finding vast universes within.

The recorded sound, by Rainer Maillard, is beautifully judged, combining gentleness with absolute clarity. Ideal for the special piano that Zimerman has chosen, poised between two eras. He's taken a modern piano and fitted it with his own keyboard, to create something with acoustic qualities that Schubert himself might have recognised. The action is lighter, there are different overtones, the hammer strikes a different point of the string. This piano sings sweetly, allows Zimerman to go for all the emotional outbursts without breaking through into our louder, modern age.

In both sonatas, Zimerman offers us finely graded dynamics, and seamlessly integrated tempos. Throughout, my overriding feeling was that his Schubert seems utterly natural. In D960, he taps into the first movement's essential loneliness, playing the exposition repeat so we hear that unsettling left-hand trill. The slow movements are played with grace, the *Scherzos* and finales sparkle. Unmissable. *Rebecca Franks*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Caprices

Boulez: Anthèmes; E Carter: 4 Lauds; Nunes: Einspielung; Sciarrino: 6 Capricci Irvine Arditti (violin) Aeon AECD 1755 64:10 mins



As leader of the string quartet he founded in 1974, and which bears his name, Irvine Arditti

has not merely commissioned and premiered countless new works, but given them performances to rival the most stellar of any music, anywhere. A superlative musician, a solo recital from him is a rare gift; indeed the last to be released on disc was in 1990.

The title *Caprices* belies the serious rapport which Arditti nurtured over decades with Carter, Nunes, Boulez and Sciarrino (he, at least, happily very much alive). The works, too, are hardly whimsical but represent a quarter-century of rigorous modernism from 1975 to 2000. Which doesn't, of course,

preclude the actual music from being full of quirks and sleights of hand; all played with white-hot virtuosity and astonishing attention to detail.

Arditti is equally at home with the fluttering, unearthly harmonics of Sciarrino's *Sei Capricci* as he is with the muscular polyphony of Carter's *4 Lauds* and the blazing comet that is Boulez's *Anthèmes I*. But it's Nunes's *Einspielung I* which has the subtlest architecture, and an intensity that holds the ear. *Steph Power*

PERFORMANCE RECORDING



Music of the Night: American Nocturnes

Works by Crumb, Beach, Griffes, Gottschalk, Bloch, Copland et al Cecile Licad (piano)

Danacord DACOCD 783-784
118:49 mins (2 discs)



For the second volume of the ambitious Anthology of American Piano Music, Cecile

Licad has turned to music of the night. It's a place of dreams and nightmares, of danger and beauty, of somnolence and insomnia.

Two discs feels rather generous, but each stands alone as a satisfying programme and together they form a useful reference resource. Pieces have been chosen for their musical worth and their 'American flavor'; I agree there are no real duds.

The programme takes us from Louis Gottschalk's gentle La chute des feuilles of 1860 to adopted-Bostonian Marc-André Hamelin's 2007 Little Nocturne. Movements from George Crumb's Eine Kleine *Mitternachtmusick*, inspired by Thelonius Monk's jazz standard Round Midnight, are interspersed throughout, guiding stars in the night sky. With their eerie, amplified piano sound-world and extended piano techniques, these offer snapshots of inky nocturnal strangeness. Amy Beach's cool and crystaline Hermit Thrush pieces are instantly appealing, and Charles Griffes's Notturno and Night Winds are impressionist gems. Barber pays homage to Field in his Nocturne, while ragtime is showcased in Joseph Lamb's Nightingale Rag. Licad plays everything with commitment and sensitivity. Rebecca Franks

PERFORMANCE RECORDING





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Brief notes

Our collection of 25 further reviews, including Gershwin, Telemann and Ravel

Bacewicz · Penderecki · Tansman

Violin works Karolina Piatkowska-Nowicka (violin), Bogna Czerwinska-Szymula (piano) Dux DUX 1399



Bacewicz's moody Fourth Violin Sonata and Penderecki's Second, written for Anne Sophie-

Mutter, sandwich Tansman's neoclassical Fantasy. Well-judged and robust performances. (RF) ★★★

Baker Piano Concerto, etc

Marc-André Hamelin (piano); Indianapolis Symphony Orch/Gilbert Varga, Juanjo Mena Naxos 8.559804



Hamelin brings to light fellow Canadian Claude Baker's Piano Concerto, a strangely unsatisfying

mishmash of styles and quotations. Schubert haunts the rest of the disc. Good performances. (RF) ★★★

Brahms Song of Destiny

Eric Ericson Chamber Choir; Gavle Symphony Orchestra/Jaime Martin Ondine ODE 1301-2



A clean and deft approach to Brahms. Darkly-hued choral pieces concerning fate and destiny

are balanced by the delicious Liebeslieder Waltzes. (RF) ★★★

Brahms Clarinet Sonatas Nos 1 & 2 Janáček Violin Sonata (transcr.)

Shirley Brill (clarinet), Jonathan Aner (piano) Hänssler Classic HC 17001



Brill's velvety sound is ideal for Brahms's autumnal sonatas, radiating a nostalgic glow tinged with

sadness, memorably offset by her skilful transcription of Janáček's haunting violin sonata. (JH) ★★★

Braunfels String Quartets Nos 1 & 2 Auryn Quartet CPO 999 406-2



Braunfels' turn-ofthe-century tonal plasticity finds a perfect musical outlet in these masterly

quartets (composed 1944). The Auryn play with tonal opulence and soaring intensity. (JH) $\star\star\star\star\star$

Duruflé • Howells Requiems

Saint Thomas Choir, Fifth Avenue, New York/John Scott Resonus RES 10200



Recorded in 2010, this release of two gems of the choral repertoire, sung with both passion and

poise, makes an ideal memorial to conductor John Scott, who died in post in 2015. (IP) $\star \star \star \star$

Gershwin Catfish Row; An

American in Paris Claron McFadden (soprano); Anima Eterna Brugge/Jos van Immerseel Alpha Classics ALPHA 289



Lively performances, includingthe Catfish Row suite based on Porgy and Bess, capped by a

'Summertime' to die for by soprano Clara McFadden. (IP) ★★★★

Gershwin/Wild

Virtuoso Etudes, etc Joanne Polk (piano) Steinway & Sons 30090



For all their virtuosic demands, Earl Wild's Gershwin studies need an element of laid-back charm.

Polk's got rhythm, but I would ask for a little bit more. (IP) ★★★

Ludford Missa Domenica

Lewis Brito-Babapulle (organ); Trinity Boys Choir; Handbell Choir Gotha/ David Swinson Rondeau ROP 8001



Ludford's Lady Mass plus chant from the Sarum Rite meet Kenneth Leighton and Graham Lack's

handbells-enriched meditation on Candlemas, all sensitively executed. (PR) $\star \star \star \star$

Messiaen Poèmes pour mi; Trois petites liturgies de la présence divine Jane Archibald (soprano); Northwest Boychoir; Seattle Symphony Orchestra Seattle Symphony SSM 1016



In Poèmes pour mi, Jane Archibald's soprano is full of rapture but never indulgent. The effect

 $of\,ethereal\,boys' voices, rather\,than$ women's voices indicated by the score, is otherworldly. (RF) $\star\star\star\star$

Piazzolla 'Legacy': Milonga del ángel etc Tomás Cotik (violin),

Tao Lin (piano) Naxos 8.573789



New adaptations for violin and piano (plus, here and there, other friends) which largely work well,

though on occasions the playing lacks a certain bounce. (JP) ★★★

Raff Works for piano & orchestra

Tra Nguyen (piano); Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra/Kerry Stratton Grand Piano GP771



Raff's unfailingly tuneful synthesis of Mendelssohn, Schumann and Liszt is not always

memorable, but one can understand his past high reputation given such roof-raising accounts. (IH) ★★★★

Schubert Winterreise

Bo Skovhus (baritone), Stefan Vladar (piano) Capriccio C5291



Skovhus sings with compelling intimacy and raw honesty, even if the tuning sometimes sours a

little. Nuanced pianism by Stefan Vladar, and the pair seem to read each other's minds. (RF) ★★★

Sheppard Media Vita; Gaude, gaude, gaude Maria; Missa Cantate Choir of Westminster Cathedral/

Martin Baker Hyperion CDA 68187



Sublime music of relinquishment and rejoicing prefaces the six-part Missa Cantate, directed

with magisterial spaciousness by Martin Baker. The recording offers a nave's-ear perspective. (PR) ★★★

R Strauss Violin Sonata: Lied 'Epheu' Lekeu Violin Sonata Rachel Kolly D'Alba (violin), Christian Chamorel (piano) Indésens INDE098



Strauss's virtuoso Sonata emerges rightly as a youthful blockbuster, driven by Chamorel's

glittering virtuosity and D'Alba's tonal sumptuousness. The Lekeu is a delectable bonus. (JH) ★★★

Telemann Complete trio sonatas

Da Camera Chaconne CHAN 0817



Four trios from the 'Darmstadt' manuscripts are persuasively taken by treble viol

(rather than violin), recorders and harpsichord. Playing and recording sparkle. (PR) ★★★

Vivaldi The Four Seasons

Henning Kraggerud (violin); Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra Simax Classics PSC 1356



Kraggerud's visceral, brighttoned approach to Four Seasons tries a little too hard in

places; four of his own somewhat inconsequential compositions are interleaved. (PR) ★★★

Agitata Works by Vivaldi, Gregori, Jommelli, Porpora, Caldara et al Delphine Galou (contralto); Accademia

Bizantina/Ottavio Dantone

(harpsichord) Alpha Classics ALPHA 371



An often feisty recital of operaticallyinflected 17th and 18th century sacred a music intercut with

instrumental items by Dantone's firebrand ensemble. (PR) ★★★

Female Composers Setareh Najfar-Nahvi (violin), Theresia Schumacher (piano) Austrian Gramophone AGO 004



A well-programmed recital that features Clara Schumann and Lili Boulanger as well as less-familiar

composers like Emilie Mayer and Johanna Senfter. Heartfelt if not immaculate accounts. (RF) ★★★

Flame Ravel, Debussy, Messiaen, Stravinsky, Fauré & Szymanowski Gwendolyn Masin (violin), Simon Bucher (piano) Orchid ORC 100075



Captivatingly phrased, strongly characterised and atmospherically recorded, Masin's

inspired programme appears to emerge languorously from a heathaze.(JH)★★★★

Homage Works and arrangements by Ries, Wienawski, Kreisler et al Vilde Frang (violin), José Gallardo (piano) Warner Classics 9029580532



A disc of encores once played by the great violinists of yesteryear. Frang is on supremely agile

and graceful form, but it's rather a musical pick-and-mix. (JP) ★★★★

Portraits: Works for Flute, Clarinet and Piano Coleman, Schoenfield and Rogerson McGill/McHale Trio; Mahershala Ali (narrator) Cedille CDR 90000 172



Mostly premiere recordings, expertly engineered that presents music of wide-ranging

proclivities whose enchanting inventiveness can't quite dispel a sense of stylistic déjà vu. (JH) ★★★

Timeless Light Works by Grigorjeva, Sink, Korvits, Pärt and Tüür Allar Kaasik (cello) BIS BIS-1887



Combined (variously) with various choirs, orchestra, organ, or solo, Kaasik's cello affords haunting

Baltic visions at once bracing (Pärt), inscrutable (Sink), and evocative (Kōrvits). (PR) ★★★

Tippet Rise Opus 2016: Domo

Works by Scriabin, Rachmaninov, Abril, Stravinsky and Chopin Yevgeny Subdin, Emily Helenbrook, Christopher O'Riley, Matt Haimovitz Pentatone PTC 5186660



A snapshot of the first ever Tippet Rise festival in Montana. World-class artists, but as a recording

the hodgepodge programme doesn't quite stack up.(RF) ★★★

Trios for violin, cello and harp

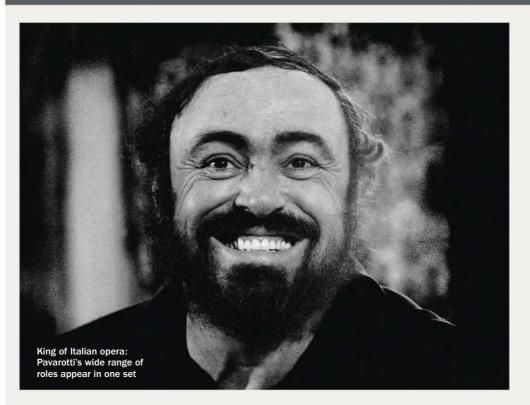
Works by Ibert, Renié, Halvorsen and Schubert Antoine Bareil (violin). Stéphane Tétreault (cello), Valérie Milot (harp) Analekta AN 29888



A fine introduction to Henriette Renié (1875-1956). Her Trio for violin, cello and harp, the highlight

of this stylishly played disc, is really rather beautiful. (JP) $\star\star\star\star$ Reviewers: Rebecca Franks (RF), Julian Haylock (JH), Jeremy Pound (JP), Paul Riley (PR)

The month in box-sets



Celebrating two recording giants

Bernstein and Pavarotti's anniversaries are marked by mammoth sets

It's a superb and

starry showcase of

Bernstein's career

The trend for ever-more comprehensive box-sets gathers pace this month. In time for Leonard Bernstein's centenary next year, Sony has released an 100-CD set: handsomely produced, with an informative booklet essay and beautifully reproduced LP covers and photos, the recordings have all been remastered from the original tapes of his American

Columbia recordings (1950-72).

The set opens with early recordings, of Stravinsky's The Soldier's Tale and Milhaud's La création du monde, and concludes with three CDs of Bernstein's

own music - West Side Story, Candide and Peter Pan. Mahler, one of Bernstein's calling cards, features - the Second, Third and Sixth Symphonies, as well as several discs of orchestral Lieder. With orchestras including the

New York Philharmonic, Columbia Symphony Orchestra and Vienna Philharmonic, and the soloists invariably starry, it makes for a superb showcase of Bernstein's charismatic conducting career. (Sony 88985417142).

On the opera front, the Bernstein set gives us Verdi's Falstaff and Strauss's Der Rosenkavalier. For

more opera, you may well head to another of this month's impressive box-sets - the 95-CD, 6 Blu-ray audio set Luciano Pavarotti: The Complete Opera Recordings (Decca 483 2417). It features every role he performed in 34 operas brought together in one place for the first time. The set includes his 1961 debut performance of

Puccini's La bohème in Modena. Donizetti and Verdi dominate, with recordings of Bellini, Mozart, Ponchielli, Mascagni and Rossini among the rest. If you're after some lighter

fare, then the Gould Piano Trio's complete Brahms piano trios and quartets set (Champs Hill Records CHRCD129) clocks in at six CDs. 'There's plenty of body to the sound, but the agility, fluency and delicacy often bring the music closer to Brahms's archetypically Romantic

> mentor Schumann,' we said of the Gould's trios back in 2009.

Another six-CD set appears from Alpha Classics (Alpha 374): Yury Martynov's cycle of Liszt transcriptions of Beethoven's complete symphonies was described as 'tremendously impressive' when first issued, so having them in one set is a boon.



Barry Witherden selects six of the best new jazz releases to enjoy this month

JAZZ CHOICE

Grand designs

Trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith pays tribute to four jazz masters, including John Coltrane





Wadada Leo Smith

Wadada Leo Smith (trumpet), Michael Gregory Jackson, Henry Kaiser etc (guitar), Bill Laswell (bass), Pheeroan akLaff (drums), Adam Rudolph (percussion) TUM Records TUM CD 049 57 mins

Trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith is a

remarkable musician and composer, winning or being nominated for more awards than you could shake the proverbial stick at. He is also a deep political and philosophical thinker. The five compositions on Najwa pay tribute to Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Ronald Shannon Jackson, Billie Holiday and, with the title track, an un-specified and symbolic lost love. The Ornette and Trane pieces are multi-mood suites. This music inhabits a world shaped by Miles Davis's Bitches Brew, Coleman's 'harmolodics' (a philosophy of improvisation), post-Coltrane free jazz and more. Replete with blistering solos and prodigious ensembles, this is a credit to all. Smith is on top form. He can wax lyrical or scorch the paintwork, but always with a strong sense of design and complex emotion. These days he seems to produce nothing but masterpieces. ****

Christmas round-up

I've been a big fan of pianist Hiromi for years, but sometimes worry that her technical virtuosity swamps her musicality. On Live in Montreal she never crosses that line, demonstrating she can get down and bluesy and gorgeously lyrical



as effectively as she can dazzle with blurredfingered pianistic prowess or envelop with

High Romantic rhapsodising. The pairing with Edmar Castaneda's harp is unusual, but this interaction of hammered and plucked strings works very well, with Castaneda often resembling the funky bassstyle of his hero, Jaco Pastorius. What might initially look like a gimmicky pairing works a treat. $(Telarc\ TEL00026 \star \star \star \star \star)$

With the 90th anniversary of John Coltrane's birth last year and the 50th anniversary of his death occurring this year, the number of tribute albums increased noticeably, ranging from attempted reconstructions of his recordings to free evocations of his artistic spirit. On The Spirit of Trane Gilad Atzmon follows Trane's methodology but has his own personal tone. The tracks include obvious choices 'Naima', 'Blue Train' and 'Giant Steps', the



latter getting a leisurely, loping treatment rather than the usual headlong rush) and unexpected

standard ballads. Atzmon doesn't imitate but vividly evokes and pays respect to Trane's spirit. The Orient House Ensemble is as immaculate as ever, and the Sigamos String Quartet is used pertinently, sparingly and subtly to add to the atmosphere. (Fanfare Jazz FF1702 ****)

Not one for the jazz purists, Live was recorded at three concerts in Germany in April, and should reinforce the already strong reputation of the (all-male) Girls In Airports. There are eight new compositions as well as



performances of four tracks from previous albums. (These statistics relate to the CD... the LP

has eight tracks.) They expressly acknowledge indie rock and urban folk influences, but there's much more, including elements drawn from genres as different as ambient music and free jazz. What matters is that they weave all the strands into a coherent, convincing, involving and enjoyable whole. $(Edition EDN 1097 \star \star \star \star \star)$

Shadow Work is the third album by **Mammal Hands** but I confess it's the first one I've heard, and I'm intrigued enough to want to catch



up on the others. Their main modus operandi seems to be to set up earworm ostinatos that gradually

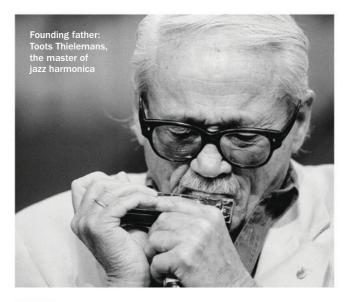
build in intensity. It could easily become predictable and tedious but instead creates a sense of inexorable, organic development, like the growing of a plant or the approach of storm clouds. Like Girls in Airports they incorporate a wide range of influences, including classical, folk, electronic and minimalist, demonstrating how malleable and porous the boundaries of jazz have become. (Gondwana Records $GONDCD021 \star \star \star \star \star$

There isn't enough room to list the full line-up of the *Blue Note* All-Stars. Suffice to say it's a fair description, especially with Wayne Shorter and Herbie Hancock as guests on 'Masquelero'. The two discs of Our Point of View keep a degree of faith with Blue Note's original hard-bop sound, but this band is, as pianist Robert Glasper



says, making its own history. Blue Note LPs usually had six tracks (fast-slow-fast/ fast-slow-fast)

but this exciting, exemplary set is more varied, less formulaic than those classic releases, wonderful as they were. (Blue Note 00602557774917 ****



K From the archives

Geoffrey Smith enjoys a live 1986 album that captures the unique harmonica style of Toots Thielemans



The harmonica may not leap to mind as a jazz instrument, but *Toots Thielemans* established both its credibility and his own in a series of star associations. In 1949, the young Belgian's gently boppish recording of 'Stardust' caught the ear of Benny Goodman, leading first to a tour with

the 'King of Swing' and then a residence in the US. Admired by the likes of Quincy Jones, his piquant, poignant sound became a distinctive element in film and TV soundtracks, while pianist George Shearing featured Thielemans on his second instrument, the guitar, in the popular Shearing quintet.

In 1961, Thielemans scored a unique solo hit with his waltz 'Bluesette', whistling the carefree tune to his guitar accompaniment. But the harmonica remained his essential jazz voice. His passionate contemporary style was strongly influenced by John Coltrane, with the harmonica's wailing lyricism evoking Coltrane's mesmerising soprano sax.

Besides collaborating with Bill Evans, Dizzy Gillespie and Oscar Peterson, Thielemans fronted his own cutting-edge groups, none more impressive than the quartet he assembled in 1986 for a European tour that culminated in a triumphant return to his Brussels hometown. Documented in the live album *Ne Me Quitte Pas* ('Don't Leave Me') (*Milan 301 719-8*), the happy occasion has just been reissued on the Milan label, providing both a scintillating musical experience and a delightful introduction to his rare talent.

He and the elite trio of pianist Fred Hersch, bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Joey Baron respond to each other superbly in a programme of blues and standards including Miles Davis's 'Blue in Green' and 'All Blues', 'Autumn Leaves', and 'Stardust', which Thielemans plays in memory of Benny Goodman, who had recently died. The adoring Brussels audience gleefully join in on 'Bluesette', whistling along with what Toots – in the French liner notes – calls his 'carte de visite'. The whole album is endearing and impressive, like Thielemans himself, and its reissue worthily commemorates his passing, a year ago, at the age of 94.



Geoffrey Smith explores jazz's greatest players and their finest music in *Geoffrey Smith's Jazz*, a weekly programme broadcast on Saturdays 12am-1am

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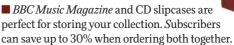


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Books

Our critics lend their views on this month's selection of classical music volumes

I Sang the Unsingable: My Life in 20th-century Music Bethany Beardslee with

Minna Zallman Proctor

University of Rochester Press ISBN 978-1-58046-900-5 418pp (hb) Without the dedication of 'composer's singer' Bethany Beardslee, many of the vocal works now acknowledged as American classics would not exist. Milton Babbitt's Philomel (1964) is a standout example of an entire.



'unsingable' canon that the soprano championed through her long career.

Now aged 91, Beardslee has joined forces

with writer Minna Zallman Proctor to produce a candid memoir full of perceptive insights into her life, music and professional milieu. From unlikely beginnings in 1920s Michigan, she sweeps by dint of love, hard work and repertoire joyfully discovered – and sometimes resisted or resented - through the Depression and war eras to the modernist hothouses of New York, Princeton and beyond.

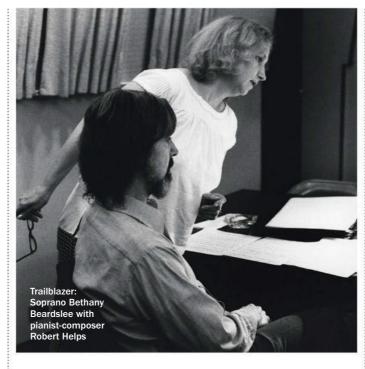
What emerges is an entertaining and highly personal, sometimes tartly honest portrait of a musical culture at a unique nexus point of past tradition and forwards-driving impulse. From reminiscences of major figures such as Stravinsky, Boulez, Martha Graham and many others unjustly neglected, to pithy observations about new music and the art of singing, this is essential reading. Steph Power ★★★★

In Conversation with Jonas Kaufmann

Thomas Voigt

Orion Books ISBN 978-1-4746-0427-7 255pp (hb)

This is less a conversation with a much-admired singer than a series of interviews stitched together with linking passages penned by Thomas Voigt, who has worked as Kaufmann's press agent. With that in mind, one wonders whether Voigt is the best person to write



about the tenor's life and career. But Kaufmann has thoughtful things to say about his repertoire - roles in Bizet's Carmen and Wagner's Lohengrin in particular – about verismo, and singing more generally.

However, you rarely feel that you get particularly close to the man or the artist. For one thing, Voigt avoids the awkward supplementary questions that push interviewees into revealing more than they had intended. Did Kaufmann really fall out with the management at



Bayreuth? Was there friction with Hans Hotter?

However, it's not that kind of book. as the fulsome tributes from fellow singers

and musicians inserted into the text makes clear. Natalie Dessay, Antonio Pappano and Helmut Deutsch all have their say, and say very nice things about their colleague. The single exception is the critic Jürgen Kesting, and even he seems to soften his reservations about Kaufmann's singing. Not

that this will make the slightest difference to the thousands who believe Ionas Kaufmann walks on water in the theatre.

Christopher Cook ★★★

Delius and Norway Andrew J Boyle

Boydell Press 978-1-78327-199-3 328pp (hb)

Delius was born in the old Yorkshire wool capital, Bradford, to German parents, and spent formative periods in Leipzig, Florida and Paris, plus regular trips to Norway: this was a cosmopolitan composer. For Andrew J Boyle, resident in Norway since 1980, it is the Norwegian connections that matter most, and he does a dangerously thorough job of teasing them out in this handsome book.

After ransacking archives and



libraries and retracing Delius's walking tours, Boyle regularly douses us with precise details of the accommodations and fjord

steamers used; of the 1897 Folkeraadet scandal prompted by the composer's 'disrespectful' musical use of Norway's national anthem (15 pages on that); or the quirks of Delius's Norwegian friends, particularly Grieg and the painter Edvard Munch, Embedded within are useful lessons in Norwegian culture and choice discussions of those works, from Sleigh Ride (1887) to *Eventyr* (1917), where Boyle's metal detector rightly detects Nordic gold. The whole book is written with the love, poetry and insight that Delius's music deserves; I only wished for less minutiae. GeoffBrown ★★★★

The Memory of Music

Andrew Ford

Black Inc Books ISBN 9781863959490 278pp (pb) Andrew Ford is a classical composer, author, and broadcaster on the Australian network ABC Radio National. His 'sort-of-memoir' gives a chronological account of his musical development, beginning in the early 1960s with nostalgic memories of family life in the Merseyside suburb of Thornton, his obsession with The Beatles, and his first taste of composition at school.



We learn of his move to Australia to take a job at the University of Wollongong, his residency with the Australian Chamber Orchestra and of

how he 'weedled' his way into a job as presenter of The Music Show.

Perhaps as a result of a career spent capturing the greatness of others – the long list of interviewees includes Tom Jones, Patti Smith and Joan Baez - his anecdotes are self deprecating. Of broadcasting, he says: 'I still feel like a complete amateur', while his writing 'has no style at all'. This book then is for those who already know and love Ford's work, offering as it does an honest, humble and amiable account of a life spent listening to music and those who make it. Nick Shave ★★

Audio gift guide

Treat someone special this Christmas or, better still, spoil yourself, as our resident audio expert Chris Haslam recommends the best present ideas

THIS MONTH: CHRISTMAS GIFTS

WALL-MOUNTED SPEAKER SYSTEM

Bang & Olufsen BeoSound Shape from £4,000

Bang & Olufsen has been producing exceptional quality designdriven audio products for decades, and with the launch of the BeoSound Shape wireless wall-mounted speaker system it has created a unique set-up that produces exceptional sonic results.

Based around a series of hexagonal tiles - behind each removable grille you'll find either an amplifier, smart hub, speaker or acoustic dampers - that clip together in your choice of pattern, fabrics and colours, the idea is that you create a wall of speakers tailored to the size of your space. The BeoSound Core hub enables wireless streaming from Apple AirPlay, Chromecast, Spotify Connect and Bluetooth 4.1 as well as Bang & Olufsen's BeoLink multi-room system, but instead of relying on standard stereo (or surround-sound) separation B&O has developed an algorithm nicknamed 'Band on the wall' which creates a soundstage as wide as the room you're in. It's an incredible feat of audio engineering and perfect for bringing the scale of a symphony hall to your living room. bang-olufsen.com





RECORD PLAYER WITH PREAMPLIFIER Shinola Runwell Turntable £2,500

Shinola is a US company that is better-known for leather goods and watches, but with the Runwell (left) they have produced a nearperfect plug-and-play belt-driven turntable. All the components, including a moving magnet cartridge and the preamplifier, are assembled and tested in Detroit, and the aluminium, steel and wood parts are all beautifully finished. It's by no means a cheap option, but the wellregarded Ortofon 2M Blue phono cartridge, fuss-free set-up and effortlessly impressive musicality makes the Runwell a hugely enjoyable listen. shinola.co.uk

VOICE-ACTIVATED MULTI-ROOM SPEAKER Sonos One £199

If you glanced at my multi-room guide in the November issue, you'll know that I love the simple usability of Sonos and the size-defying sound quality of the Play:1 speaker. With the One (right), Sonos has kept the performance but added Amazon Alexa voice control, which means you can now simply ask 'Alexa, play Shostakovich'.

At first, voice control feels gimmicky, but give it a week and you'll be hooked, not least because the Play:1 can integrate with existing Sonos speakers and also act as your alarm clock, digital radio and weather reporter. It will even control your lights and heating if they're 'smart'. My review sample did struggle with some pronunciation and Amazon Prime Music doesn't have the best selection of classical music - but more integration is coming. sonos.com



PORTABLE MEDIA PLAYER

Astell & Kern AK70 £499

With a smartphone (and millions of albums) in your pocket, it can be difficult to justify buying a separate media player, even if it does handle high-resolution audio files (up to 24-bit/192kHz) and sounds impeccable, but with the Astell & Kern AK70 (below) you get a generous two-for-one deal as it can double up as an equally accomplished DAC (digital-to-analogue converter) and headphone amp, greatly improving the sound quality from your laptop or desktop computers. Go on, treat yourself. astellnkern.com





Close comforts:

the PXs dispel unwanted noise

While I've only had them a week, the first wireless active noisecancelling headphones by Bowers & Wilkins (above) could be my pick for 2017. As well as adjustable active noise-cancelling technology (using microphones to counter background sound), the PXs have great battery life (22 hours), twin 40mmspeakers, up-sampling technology to make the most of even poor-quality MP3 streaming, and aptX-HD (the new best-inclass standard for better than CD-quality streaming). They also sound utterly delightful, with a precise, sophisticated and endlessly appealing performance. bowers-wilkins.co.uk

WIRELESS STREAMING SPEAKER Audio Pro Addon C5 £230

Swedish brand Audio Pro makes simple, interior-friendly speakers that sound terrific, especially for the price. Not only can the C5 (left) stream over Bluetooth, but it is primed for Spotify Connect, Google Chromecast and Apple AirPlay. It can also pull any songs stored locally on Network-attached storage (NAS) drives and work as a multi-room system via an app. Refreshingly, thanks to an RCA port, you can also plug in a CD player or turntable (with a pre-amp). audiopro.com



Sounds of the future *Michael Brook* predicts the audio kit that will make its mark in 2018

For me, 2017 was the year wireless connectivity went mainstream, Bluetooth headphones finally sounded good and high-resolution streaming was mentioned outside audiophile circles. As for the year ahead, I'll bet my vinyl collection on the continued rise of voice-controlled speakers and headphones, especially given that Apple (see HomePod, above), Sony, Samsung, Sonos, Amazon and Google are investing heavily in the technology. Think of it as an extension

of the smartphone app, and you'll appreciate its potential, even if the current technology struggles to understand my pronunciation of composer Musorgsky.

Secondly, and perhaps more exciting from a musical point of view, is the rise of the personal headphone (like the £349 Nuraphone, above), where algorithms borrowed from medical hearing tests are used to create a sound profile specifically tailored for the way you hear. I've tried a few early examples and I believe it won't be long before we're all enjoying a bespoke listening experience.





Venue of the month The UK's best concert halls

3. St John's **Smith Square**

Where: Westminster, London **Opened**: 1969 **Seats: 760**

The former church of St John's Smith Square was damaged in World War II and rebuilt as a concert hall in the 1960s. Regarded as one of the best examples of English Baroque architecture, the limestone building, with its four distinctive towers, was completed in 1728 and acquired the nickname 'Queen Anne's footstool' – when architect Thomas Archer asked the queen what it should look like, she reputedly kicked over her footstool and said 'like that'.

The inaugural concert in the restored venue was held in October 1969 and featured soprano Dame Joan Sutherland. St John's Smith Square became used for regular BBC broadcasts and in the 1980s a fund was set up for its new pipe organ, built by Johannes Klais of Bonn. The venue is used yearround and hosts concerts as part of the London Handel Festival, the London Festival of Baroque Music and the Westminster Abbey Summer Organ Festival.

Each year, the Christmas Festival at St John's Smith Square features a selection of the UK's finest choirs, brought together by artistic director Stephen Layton. This winter, Layton's ensemble Polyphony is joined by Vox Luminis and The Tallis Scholars.

Live choice

Paul Riley selects the UK's best concerts and operas for Christmas 2017



LONDON **Early Opera Company** Wigmore Hall, London, 8 Dec Tel: +44 (0)20 7935 2141

Web: www.wigmore-hall.org.uk Charpentier at Christmastide can only mean one thing: the Messe de minuit pour Noël. But conductor Christian Curnyn adds a seasonal bonus, the pastoral In nativitatem Domini canticum, and concludes with Charpentier's jubilant setting of the Te Deum.

Christmas Festival

St John's Smith Square, London, 9-23 Dec Tel: +44 (0)20 7222 1061 Web: www.sjss.org.uk St John's Smith Square (left) extends season's greetings with a 32nd festival that honours tradition with Polyphony's timehonoured Handel Messiah. Vocal groups appearing include Vox Luminis and The Tallis Scholars.

Rimsky-Korsakov's Christmas Eve Cadogan Hall, London, 10 Dec Tel: +44 (0)20 7730 4500

Web: www.cadoganhall.com Can the blacksmith Vakula secure the Tsarina's slippers and win the hand of his beloved Oxana? Timothy Burke conducts Chelsea Opera Group in a concert performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's operatic adaptation of Gogol's exotic folk tale.

Temple Winter Festival Temple Church,

London, 11-15 Dec Tel: +44 (0)20 7427 5641 Web: templewinterfestival.co.uk Not content with conducting his own group, The Gesualdo Six, in a programme juxtaposing Renaissance and contemporary works, the following night Owain Park returns to Temple Winter Festival to make his debut directing the BBC Singers. Bookending the festival are Temple Church's own home team - performing works by Sweelinck, Buxtehude and Messiaen – and Voces 8.

Christmas at Kings Place Kings Place, London, 14-20 Dec

Tel: +44 (0)20 7520 1490 Web: www.kingsplace.co.uk The Hanover Band and Chorus's Messiah and the Feinstein Ensemble's Bach Christmas Oratorio frame a Christmas

cavalcade that includes the pukka polish of brass septet Septura in music ranging from Schütz and Praetorius to Tchaikovsky. The Amadeus Orchestra, meantime, accompanies a screening of Raymond Briggs's The Snowman.

Alexandra Dariescu

Milton Court, London, 19 Dec Tel: +44 (0)20 7638 8891 Web: www.barbican.org.uk 'The Nutcracker and I' is the title of the Romanian pianist's new project enlisting ballerina Désirée Ballantyne and digital animation by Yeast Culture in a personal twist on Tchaikovsky's enchanted ballet. Three specially commissioned new piano transcriptions of excerpts by Gavin Sutherland sit alongside virtuosic arrangements by the likes of Percy Grainger and Mikhail Pletnev.

SOUTH Tom Winpenny St Albans Cathedral, 10 Dec

Tel: +44 (0)1727 890290 Web: www.stalbanscathedral.org Having recorded many of Messiaen's major organ works for Naxos, the assistant master of the music at St Albans is on home ground, tackling La Nativité du Seigneur, a ninemovement meditation on The Birth of the Saviour.

Ligeti Ouartet

Corn Exchange, Dorchester, 17 Dec Tel: +44 (0)1305 266926 Web: www.dorchesterarts.org.uk Narrated by Mark Tattersall. and with music by Charlotte and Adam Caird, Dylan Thomas's A Child's Christmas in Wales provides the seasonal climax to a concert featuring Stef Conner's Singing Strings and Lassana Diabaté's Sunjata's Time.

Spiritato!

Turner Sims, Southampton, 19 Dec Tel: +44 (0)23 8059 5151 Web: www.turnersims.co.uk Spiritato! proposes an Italian Baroque take on Christmas including Corelli's celebrated Concerto Grosso, Op. 6 No. 8 and – with soprano Augusta Hebbert - Scarlatti's cantata O di Betlemme altera.

EAST Mediva

St Mary's Church, Dedham, 10 Dec

Tel: +44 (0)1206 366603 Web: suffolkvillagesfestival.com Shawms, recorders, fiddle and clavicymbalum swell Mediva's armoury for 'Gabriel's Message', an Advent and Christmas tapestry weaving together songs, carols and dances from medieval England.

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Saffron Hall,

Saffron Walden, 21 Dec Tel: 0845 548 7650 (UK only) Web: www.saffronhall.com The choir of Trinity College Cambridge teams up with the OAE for parts 1, 2, 3 & 6 of Bach's Christmas Oratorio. It's repeated as part of the St John's Smith Square Christmas Festival the following night (see London).

MIDLANDS NORTH & WALES

Gabrieli Consort & Players The Minster, Hull, 2 Dec

Tel: +44 (0)1482 224460 Web: www.gabrieli.com The Gabrielis bid a sumptuous farewell to Luther Year with a return to their landmark 1994

disc wrapping music by Samuel and Schein around a Christmas Mass and motets by Michael Praetorius (see p62).

York Early Music Christmas Festival

York, 8-16 Dec

Tel: +44 (0)1904 658338 Web: www.ncem.co.uk/xmas The Ebor Singers and Chelys Consort of Viols delve into seasonal fare from the Court of Charles I, while The Society of Strange and Ancient Instruments lend a Norwegian twist to York's festive fiesta. Taking a different tack, the Chiaroscuro Quartet presents Haydn's Op. 76 set complete over three concerts.

Stile Antico

St George's Hall, Liverpool, 10 Dec Tel: +44 (0)151 709 3789 Web: www.liverpoolphil.com The 12-voice ensemble celebrates a Tudor Christmas as motets by Byrd and large-scale settings by White and Sheppard interleave Tallis's Missa Puer natus est nobis.

Joglaresa

Lakeside Arts, Nottingham, 14 Dec Tel: +44 (0)115 846 7777 Web: www.joglaresa.com Joglaresa notches up its quarter century with the release of a new disc and an eight-concert tour. 'Sing We Yule' is an eclectic, ear-bending mélange braving US rap (in Latin) and a sixth-century Welsh lullaby, not to mention an instrumental Portuguese piece, entitled The Killer Rabbit.

The Sixteen

St David's Hall, Cardiff, 17 Dec Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 8444 Web: www.stdavidshallcardiff.co.uk A new carol by Marco Galvani graces The Sixteen's mouthwatering Christmas programme, incorporating Poulenc's Quatre motets pour le temps de Noël and motets by Palestrina.

SCOTLAND & N IRELAND

Scottish Ensemble

Caird Hall, Dundee, 4 Dec Tel: +44 (0)1382 434940 Web: www.scottishensemble.co.uk Conductor Robert Hollingworth's vocal ensemble I Fagiolini (see box, above) links arms with the Scottish Ensemble for a six-venue candlelit Advent tour

BACKSTAGE WITH... Conductor Robert Hollingworth



I Fagiolini is embarking on a tour across Scotland with the Scottish Ensemble. How did you select the programme?

I've been exchanging scores with the Scottish Ensemble's artistic director, Jonathan Morton, by phone and email. The programme isn't a traditional Christmas one – I'm going to use the word 'esoteric'. From my point of view it's always nice to get out there and do a programme that is at least half contemporary music.

You are known as, among other things, a major champion of Monteverdi. Are you including any of his works?

We have a lovely piece for a solo singer and strings called Tempro la cetra which means 'I tune my lyre'. It refers to a 16th-century string instrument that could play chords. At the start of each section there is a little instrumental passage, where the strings recreate the sound of a lyre tuning.

Is there a Christmas-inspired work that you are particularly looking forward to performing?

We first performed Adrian Williams's Winter Chorale at I Fagiolini's 20th-birthday concert and it's written for strings and eight voices. I've had a long connection with him and he's a wonderful craftsman. He set the text of Laurie Lee's Winter Poem, which refers to what a Christmas in England is like at this time of year while also linking it back to the Nativity story. I Fagiolini and The Scottish Ensemble begin a six-night joint tour in Caird Hall, Dundee on 4 December

spanning Byrd to Adrian Williams - via Bach and Monteverdi, Arvo Pärt and James MacMillan.

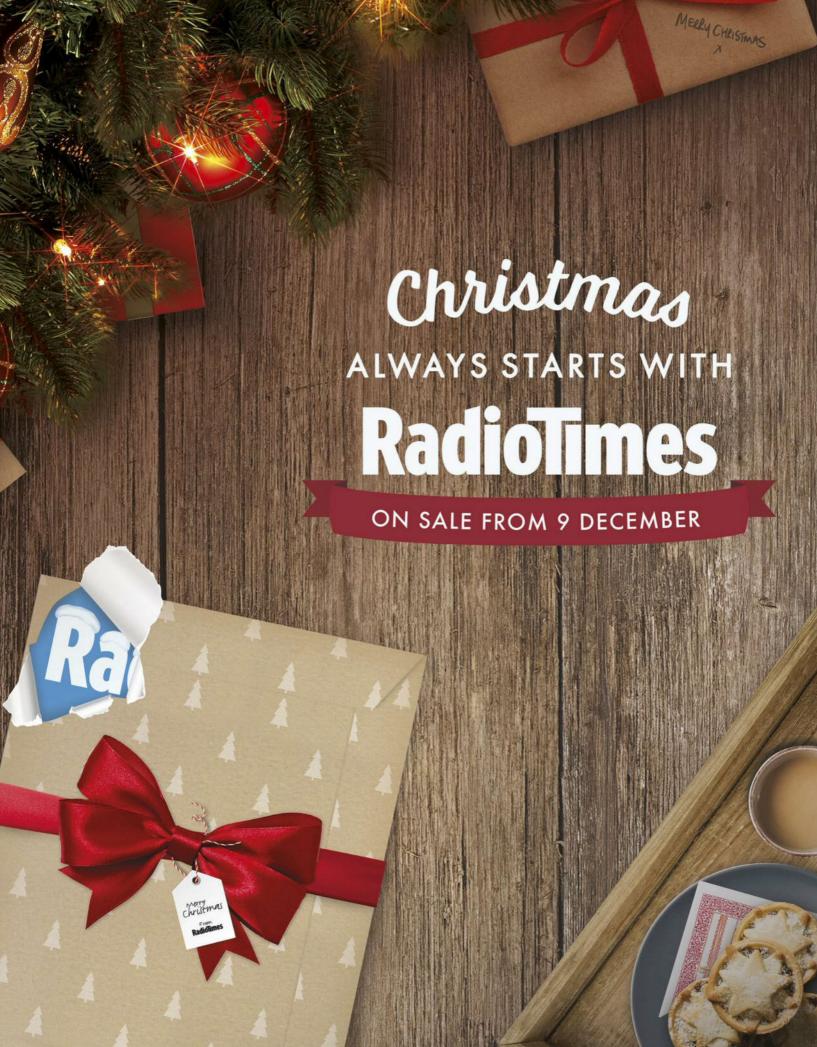
Ulster Orchestra

Ulster Hall, Belfast, 19 Dec Tel: +44 (0)28 9033 4455 Web: www.ulsterorchestra.org.uk The Ulster Orchestra's lunchtime 'Box of Festive Delights' includes Fireside Dreams from Richard Strauss's opera Intermezzo, Debussy's Children's Corner and a Suite drawn from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker. Christoph Altstaedt conducts.

The Dunedin Consort

Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, 19 Dec Tel: +44 (0)131 668 2019 Web: www.dunedin-consort.org.uk

It wouldn't be Christmas without a performance of Handel's Messiah – even if its remit extends well beyond the events of the Nativity. Fresh from Bach's Christmas Oratorio in Perth and London, John Butt and his Dunedin forces offer a 'Hallelujah' to the 275th anniversary of the oratorio's Dublin premiere.



TV&Radio

From Nine Lessons and Carols to Puccini's Paris, we delve into this year's festive highlights



THE 12 BEST CHRISTMAS PROGRAMMES

St John's Advent 1 St John Service

Radio 3's annual Advent carol service from St John's College, Cambridge is one of the month's true gems. Andrew Nethsingha's choir marks the 100th birthday of composer and organist Francis Jackson with a performance of his serene carol I Know a Flower and there is also a new commission from talented young composer Ben Comeau: The Last and Greatest Herald.

Radio 3; Choral Evensong: 3 Dec, 3pm

7 Temple Church 🚄 Music Festival

In the 12th-century setting of London's Temple Church, this winter's Music Festival welcomes chamber choir Voces8. Their programme, entitled 'Lullabies to an Infant King' includes carols old and new, and opens with Praetorius's chorale Est ist ein Ros' entsprungen (see Composer of the Month, p62).

Radio 3; Live in Concert; E 15 Dec, 7.30pm

3 Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Tchaikovsky's 1892 ballet

The Nutcracker has long been a seasonal favourite with its story about a Christmas gift that comes to life. In Sound of Dance, Radio 3 teams up with Birmingham Royal Ballet to explore its timeless appeal. Radio 3; Sound of Dance; 16 Dec, 3pm

EBU Christmas Music Day

4 As its 50th-anniversary year draws to a close, the European Broadcasting Union embarks on a festive musical tour, beginning live in Helsinki's Kallio Church with works by Brahms and Reger. It concludes in Portugal - in the 18th-century Mafra monastery church - with a concert featuring six organs and three choirs. Radio 3; EBU Music Day; 17 Dec

5 In Tune at Christmas
Radio 3's In Tune celebration, broadcast live from the BBC's Radio Theatre, sees presenters Sean Rafferty and Katie Derham joined by special guests including comedian Alexander Armstrong, The Academy of St Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble and the BBC Singers.

Radio 3; In Tune; 18 Dec, 4.30pm

Preakfast Carol O Competition

This year, Radio 3 invited settings of the 15th-century poem Sir Christemas. With all entries now submitted, the competition is in its final stages, with the six shortlisted carols performed live by the BBC Singers on Breakfast on 15 Dec. Following a public vote, the winner will be revealed on 21 Dec.

Radio 3; Breakfast; 21 Dec

Carols From King's

For 2017, Stephen Cleobury directs the King's College Choir in a service that includes his own arrangement of The Linden Tree Carol, alongside Judith Weir's Illuminare Jerusalem (written for the service in 1985) and James Whitbourn's The Magi's Dream. There will, of course, be traditional carol favourites, plus poetry by Christina Rossetti. BBC Two; Carol's From King's; 24 Dec, time tbc

Christmas Eucharist
This year's televised morning service on BBC One comes from All Saints Church, Fulham, just north of the Thames. A rousing selection of congregational carols will, no doubt, help viewers mark Christmas in reverent style. BBC One; Christmas Day; 25 Dec. 10am

Puccini's La bohèmeWith its opening backdrop of Paris on Christmas Eve, Puccini's La bohème is packed with wintry references, not least when the action moves to the chilly outdoors in Act II. On Christmas Day, BBC Four will show the recent Royal Opera House production, with soprano Nicole Car and tenor Michael Fabiano as the fated lovers. BBC Four; 25 Dec, time tbc

Alfred Brendel

Performances by pianist Alfred Brendel, now 86, have often been selected by guests on Radio 3's Private Passions but he has yet to take his own place in the hot seat. Back in 1971 Brendel picked Bach's B minor Prelude, BWV 893 as his Desert Island Discs pick, so his choices 46 years later will surely be fascinating.

Radio 3; Private Passions; 31 Dec, 12 noon

Dickensian Christmas

11 Dickensian Christmas Day treat, actor Simon Callow evokes the spirit of Christmas with readings from some of Charles Dickens's most celebrated works, alongside carols performed by the BBC Singers. Radio 3; Simon Callow's Dickensian Christmas; 25 Dec, 3.45pm

) Last Night of the Proms

Why not see the year out with the finale of the BBC Proms? Sakari Oramo conducts a mix of the familiar end-of-term favourites plus works by Sibelius, John Adams and others. Radio 3; Prom 75 (rpt); 31 Dec, 9.25pm

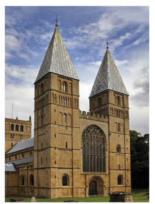
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Southwell Minster



The Cathedral for Nottinghamshire.

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01636 812649 southwellminster.org

Westminster Cathedral



Westminster Cathedral Choir is regarded as one of the finest choirs in the world. Their Christmas concert, *A Christmas Celebration*, brings together music and liturgy in the candle-lit, beautifully atmospheric Byzantine Cathedral. Hear the world-renowned Cathedral Choir performing beautiful Christmas motets, and feel the Christmas spirit descend upon you. Find tickets on ticketmaster.co.uk.

0844 844 0444 westminstercathedral.org.uk

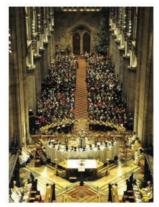
Buckfast Abbey



Buckfast Abbey is an impressive Benedictine monastery nestled in the foothills of Dartmoor National Park. A rich musical tradition awaits visitors at all times, from Gregorian chant sung by the monks, to Abbey Choir services and concerts, and carol services. As part of the millennium celebrations in 2018, a Festival of Sacred Music will take place between 14 and 22 April 2018.

01364 645500 buckfast.org.uk

Hereford Cathedral



Highlights include a 'Christmas Sparkle' organ recital, Advent and Christmas carol services, 'Light up a Life' event for St Michael's Hospice, Handel's Messiah performed by Hereford Choral Society, Ex Cathedra's Christmas by Candlelight concert, and Bach's Christmas Oratorio sung by Hereford Cathedral Choir with Marches Baroque. Some services are webcast.

01432 374212 herefordcathedral.org

Manchester Cathedral



Join us this Christmas for world-class choral music in the heart of Manchester's medieval quarter. Performances include Handel's *Messiah*, Family Carols and traditional carol services featuring the Stoller Organ built by Kenneth Tickell & Co. The collegiate church of St Mary, St Denys & St George was founded in 1421 and made a cathedral in 1847.

01618 332220 manchestercathedral.org

Lincoln Cathedral



Lincoln Cathedral is one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture in Europe. Built by command of William the Conqueror, the Cathedral stood as the tallest building in the world for almost 300 years and is still a breath-taking feature of the Lincolnshire skyline.

01522 561600 lincolncathedral.com



Orchestra of Opera North

Arguably the most cherished soundtrack to the Christmas season is the score to Raymond Briggs' The Snowman.

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Hugh Brunt conductor

John Savournin presenter

Prokofiev Suite: Cinderella **Howard Blake** The Snowman

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Orchestra of Opera North





Justin Brown conductor

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10th December Amatis Trio

A concert with a twist! Alongside beloved works by Haydn and Shostakovich, the award-winning Amatis **Trio** offers the audience a chance to vote for the work performed in the second half.



17th December **London Mozart Players**

Our 2017 series is brought to a joyful close by the London Mozart Players and principal clarinettist Tim Lines, performing two of the greats of the repertoire; the clarinet quintets by Mozart and Brahms.



7th January I Musicanti

Beginning the 2018 season, **Leon Bosch & I Musicanti** present works including Schubert's *Irout* Quintet and his rarely-performed *Adagio & Rondo Concertante*, for which pianist **Martin Roscoe** will take centre stage.



14th January

Eusebius Quartet

The Eusebius Quartet continues our chamber music offering with Korngold's 1937 quartet, written at the height of his powers as a Hollywood composer, flanked by lyrical, exhuberant works by Haydn and Mendelssohn.





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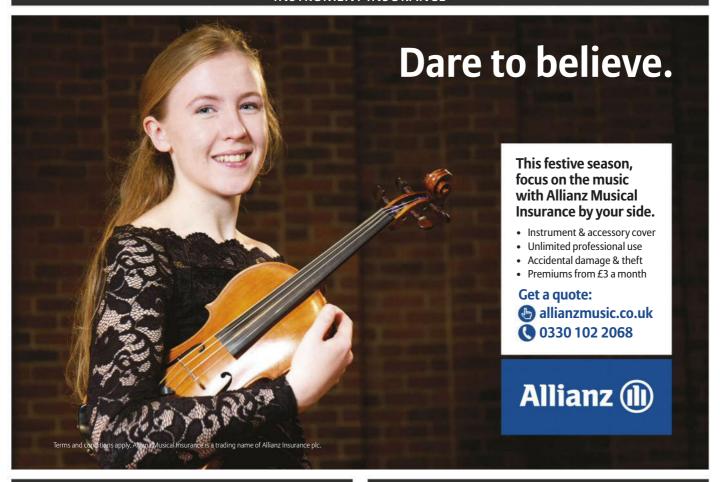


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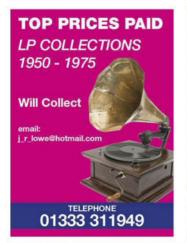
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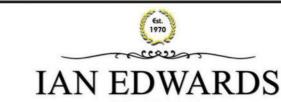
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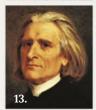


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The Christmas Quiz answers

From p58

Ding Dong! Merrily on High

1. In dulci jubilo 2. Rachmaninov 3. The Academy of St Martin in the Fields 4. Khachaturian 5. The Westminster Chimes, as heard in Elizabeth Tower, Palace of Westminster. (And as it's Christmas, we'll also accept 'Big Ben' as an answer).

Stocking fillers

6. Handel's Messiah

7. Rossini 8. Lully

9. Hans Sachs 10. Mozart

Sing! Choirs of Angels

11. Fanny Mendelssohn

12. Handel 13. Liszt

14. Gabriel Jackson

(all pictured above)

Dinner time

15. *Ma mère l'Oye* (Mother Goose)

16. Champagne: The 'champagne aria' in Don Giovanni; The

Champagne Galop; and Champagne Supernova 17. Brussels (sprouts)

18. Philip Glass

19. Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker

Party games

20. Ludwig van Beethoven

21. Camille Saint-Saëns

22. Edward Egar

23. Peter Maxwell Davies

24. Pietro Mascagni

Time to reminisce

25. Jeffrey Tate 26. Chopin

27. Nicolai Gedda

28. A bag of gold coins he'd discovered in the piano was valued at a six-figure sum 29. Igor Levit

30. Despite being known as the 'Musicians' Church' it announced it would no longer host secular music-making

The BBC Music Magazine PRIZE CROSSWORD NO. 315



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Your name & address	

OCTOBER SOLUTION No. 312

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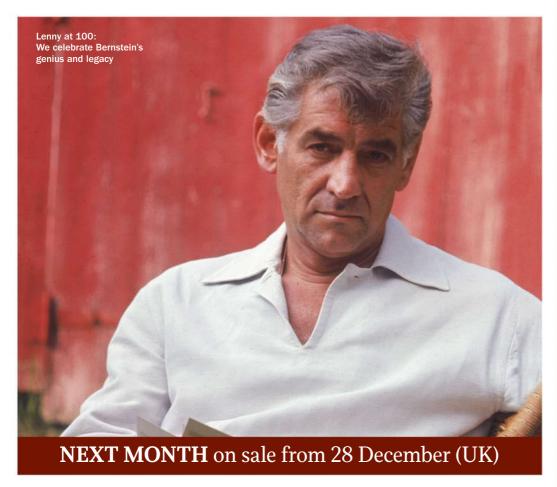
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ACROSS

- 1 The French keep saying 27 19a (6)
- Russian composer beginning to beat with old baton I note (7)
- 10 High line of Debussy's offering little support (7)
- 11 Invitation specifying concert time? That's hardly right (4,3)
- 12 Some particular Gounod slow movement (5)
- 13 Arranged trios with glee something from Ravel opera? (9)
- 14 Petite soprano getting completely behind music initially (5)
- 15 Warrant Juliet's first love represented as inspiration for Berlioz? (6,3)
- 17 Looks like losing leader after engaging number for small musical groups (9)
- 19 Dance music from Disney, we hear (5)
- 21 Company correct about play not having the French legal protection (9)
- 24 Funny contribution to ball or dancing recalled (5)
- 25 Ancient piece involving piano (a modern reconstruction) (7)
- 26 Copy one small piece, receiving cheers (7)
- 27 Creative skills backed by American soprano and composer (7)
- 28 27 19a providing some conductor a gift in return (6)

- 2 27 19a depicting himself and others? (9)
- How early piano performances were captured with success (2,1,4)
- No exam will overlook ultimate components of music (5)
- Places for secret work to support chamber music's heart (9)
- Maria OK with dancing Greek dance (7)
- See 19 down
- When many a 27 19a is played in Tippett opera (3,4)
- I had ridiculous upset, overlooking one 27 19a (6)
- 15 Gets La mer rearranged as 27 19a (9)
- 16 Be elated with Promenade broadcasting (4,2,3)
- 17 Additional pieces seen afresh, receiving expression of approval (7)
- 18 Composer mostly reduced by restricting skill (7)
- 19/7 Steps taken in support of union for 27 19a (7,5)
- 20 English counter tenor not initially supporting unknown contemporary of 27 (6)
- 22 Wind player with piano in support (5)
- 23 One interrupting the forte? That's criminal (5)



LEONARD BERNSTEIN

As the centenary anniversary celebrations of the US conductor and composer begin, *Humphrey Burton* salutes a truly iconic figure



LEONARD BERNSTEIN **ORCHESTRAL WORKS**

Including *Serenade*, performed by violinist Anne Akiko Meyers (left) with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra

PLUS! We explore the wonderful world of the organ, while Paul Spicer reveals the joy of discovering unknown choral gems; **Bizet** is our Composer of the Month and Jessica Duchen names the best recordings of **Beethoven**'s Hammerklavier Sonata in Building a Library; James Naughtie meets conductor Thomas Dausgaard and much more...

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Jan-Dec 2016 35,734

Music that changed me Kristjan Järvi

conductor and composer

Born in Estonia in 1972 into a family of musicians, Kristjan Järvi has carved out a diverse and varied career as conductor, composer and producer. He's passionate about presenting classical music in new ways, and in recent years has set up both the classical hip-hop jazz group Absolute Ensemble and the Baltic Sea Philharmonic. He is also music director of the MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra, and runs his own production company Sunbeam Productions. Last year he became the first musician to take up an official post on the Estonian Olympic committee.

■ here was always music at home. We lived in Estonia, which was part of the Soviet Union back then, so music was a way to express something without saying anything directly. My first big musical occasion was when I was six or seven at one of the Estonian song festivals, with 60,000 people singing. My father (Neeme Järvi) took part as a conductor. The Estonian National Anthem was outlawed, but we sang a piece by GUSTAV ERNESAKS called Mu isamaa on minu arm ('My Fatherland is My Love'). No one could say anything against it, because the fatherland could be the Soviet Union. Even if I listen to it now, it makes me cry. It's so strong and emotional.

I grew up thinking that everyone was a musician, that it was strange when somebody wasn't. I thought maybe it would be better not to be a musician because there are so many in my family already. I've always been interested in astronomy and physics. What is existence? What is reality? I'm also very interested in foreign relations and politics. We left Estonia for American when I was eight, and I asked my dad when we would go back. I didn't understand. Part of the reason I started the Baltic Sea Philharmonic in 2016 is because it can guide people to focus on the similarities



The choices

Gustav Ernesaks 'Mu isamaa on minu arm' YouTube

Beethoven Cavatina from String Quartet No. 13, Op. 130

Végh Quartet Naïve V4871

Korngold

'Marietta's Lied' from Die tote Stadt Renée Fleming (soprano); English Chamber Orchestra/Jeffrey Tate Decca 478 4446

Sigur Rós 'Festival' (from the album Með suð í eyrum við spilum endalaust) Sigur Rós Parlophone 234 3161

Kanye West 'Blood on the Leaves' (from the album Yeezus)

Kanye West Def Jam Recordings 602537432134

of their identities rather than differences. Music is the perfect vehicle. It's also the perfect vehicle for understanding existence as well.

I first came across the Cavatina from **BEETHOVEN**'s String Quartet, Op. 130 when I was studying music as a kid. There are pieces like Orff's Carmina Burana that affected me but didn't have much

meaning. This Beethoven had the most incredible impact on me. Now I perform it in concert with full string orchestra, arranged by Wilhelm Furtwängler, usually as an encore. It's one of the pieces, like my other choices here, that changed the way I compose. They influenced my output, style, psyche and, actually, my way of life.

Korngold is one of my greatest heroes. A lot of people think that Hollywood's music has an American sound, but the Gone With the Wind score was written by Strauss's student Max Steiner. The most famous scores were by Steiner, Korngold and Rósza, from Munich, Vienna and Budapest. So American music must be the most central European music ever written. KORNGOLD's 'Marietta's Lied' has particular meaning for me. I didn't know it until I went on tour with soprano Renée Fleming, who sang it, and then I discovered Korngold's songs. I have no idea why people perform Mahler and Strauss's songs but not Korngold's. They have such depth and poignancy.

I love the song 'Festival' by Jónsi from the Icelandic band **SIGUR RÓS**. It's in Danny Boyle's film 127 Hours, which I haven't actually seen, but it's about a guy getting stuck in a canyon and having to cut his arm off. 'Festival' is one of the most bleak but triumphant pieces of music I know, and it's a ten-minute journey into another world. A lot of Sigur Rós's music takes us to a different dimension. We're all trying to do that as musicians: to take people into a better world.

I was hanging around with my son in Rome last year when he played **KANYE** WEST's 'Blood on the Leaves' to me. West samples jazz singer Nina Simone's performance of the song Strange Fruit

which was originally made famous by Billie Holiday. It's a brutal song but I think it's fantastic. I get so excited whenever I play this to other people. It's so unbelievably awesome. Interview by Rebecca Franks



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BWV 026 «ach wie flüchtig, ach wie nichtig»

BWV 020 «o ewigkeit, du donnerwort»









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BWV 066 «erfreut euch, ihr herzen»

BWV 107 «was willst du dich betrüben»

8WV 110 «unser mund sei voll lachens»

BWV 009 «es ist das heil uns kommen her»

BWV 173 «erhöhtes fleisch und blut»

BWV 166 «wo gehest du hin»

BWV 184 «erwünschtes freudenlicht»

BWV 191 «gloria in excelsis deo»

BWV 029 «wir danken dir, gott, wir danken dir»

BWV 119 «preise, jerusalem, den herrn»

BWV 056 «ich will den kreuzstab gerne tragen»

BWV 095 «christus, der ist mein leben



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